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THE

WORKS

OF

PRESIDENT EDWARDS.

IN TEN VOLUMES.

VOLUME III.

CONTAINING,

I. DISSERTATION ON THE END FOR WHICH GOD CREATED THE WORLD.
II. DISSERTATION ON THE NATURE OF TRUE VIRTUE.
III. HISTORY OF THE WORK OF REDEMPTION.
IV. AN ATTEMPT TO PROMOTE EXPLICIT AGREEMENT AND VISIBLE UNION OF GOD'S PEOPLE IN EXTRAORDINARY PRAYER.
V. DISTINGUISHING MARKS OF A WORK OF THE SPIRIT OF GOD.

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A

DISSERTATION

CONCERNING

THE END FOR WHICH GOD CREATED

THE

WORLD.

PREFACE BY THE FIRST EDITOR.

The Author had designed these Dissertations* for the public view; and wrote them out as they now appear: though it is probable, that if his life had been spared, he would have revised them, and rendered them in some respects more complete. Some new sentiments, here and there, might probably have been added; and some passages brightened with further illustrations. This may be conjectured from brief hints or sentiments minuted down on loose papers, found in the manuscripts.

But those sentiments concisely sketched out, which, it is thought, the author intended to enlarge, and digest into the body of the work, cannot be so amplified by any other hand, as to do justice to the author: it is therefore probably best that nothing of this kind should be attempted.

As these Dissertations were more especially designed for the learned and inquisitive, it is expected that the judicious and candid will not be disposed to object, that the manner in which these subjects are treated is something above the level of common readers. For though a superficial way of discourse and loose harangues may well enough suit some subjects, and answer some valuable purposes; yet other subjects demand more closeness and accuracy. And if an author should neglect to do justice to a subject, for fear that the simpler sort should not fully understand him, he might expect to be deemed a trifler by the more intelligent.

Our author had a rare talent to penetrate deep in search of truth; to take an extensive survey of a subject, and look through it into remote consequences. Hence many theorems, that appeared hard and barren to others, were to him pleasant and fruitful fields, where his mind would expatiate with peculiar ease, profit and entertainment. Those studies, which to some are too fatiguing to the mind, and wearying to the constitution, were to him but a natural play of genius, and which his mind without labour would freely and spontaneously perform. A close and conclusive way of reasoning upon a controversial point was easy and natural to him.

This may serve, it is conceived, to account for his usual manner of treating abstruse and controverted subjects, which some have thought has been too metaphysical. But the truth is, that his critical

* This preface was originally prefixed to the two first Dissertations, "concerning the End for which God created the World, and the nature of true Virtue."

method of looking through the nature of his subject—his accuracy and precision in canvassing truth, comparing ideas, drawing consequences, pointing out and exposing absurdities,—naturally led him to reduce the evidence in favour of truth into the form of demonstration; which, doubtless, where it can be obtained, is the most eligible, and by far the most satisfying to great and noble minds. And though some readers may find the labour hard to keep pace with the writer, in the advances he makes, where the ascent is arduous; yet in general all was easy to him: such was his peculiar love and discernment of truth, and natural propensity to search after it. His own ideas were clear to him, where some readers have thought them obscure. Thus many things in the works of Newton and Locke, which appear either quite unintelligible, or very obscure to the illiterate, were clear and bright to those illustrious authors, and their learned readers.

The subjects here handled are sublime and important. The end which God had in view in creating the world, was doubtless worthy of him; and consequently the most excellent and glorious possible. This therefore must be worthy to be known by all the intelligent creation, as excellent in itself, and worthy of their pursuit. And as true virtue distinguishes the inhabitants of heaven, and all the happy candidates for that world of glory, from all others; there cannot surely be a more interesting subject.

The notions which some men entertain concerning God's end in creating the world, and concerning true virtue, in our late author's opinion, have a natural tendency to corrupt Christianity, and to destroy the gospel of our divine Redeemer. It was therefore, no doubt, in the exercise of a pious concern for the honour and glory of God, and a tender respect to the best interests of his fellow-men, that this devout and learned writer undertook the following work.—May the Father of lights smile upon the pious and benevolent aims and labours of his servant, and crown them with his blessing!

A

DISSERTATION

CONCERNING

GOD'S CHIEF END, &c.

INTRODUCTION.

Containing Explanations of Terms and general Positions.

To avoid all confusion in our enquiries concerning the end for which God created the world, a distinction should be observed between the *chief* end for which an agent performs any work, and the *ultimate* end. These two phrases are not always precisely of the same signification: and though the *chief* end be always an *ultimate* end, yet every ultimate end is not always a chief end. A *chief* end is opposite to an *inferior* end: An *ultimate* end is opposite to a *subordinate* end.

A *subordinate* end is what an agent aims at, not at all upon its own account, but wholly on the account of a *further* end, of which it is considered as a means. Thus when a man goes a journey to obtain a medicine to restore his health, the obtaining of that medicine is his subordinate end; because it is not an end that he values at all upon its own account; but wholly as a means of a further end, *viz.* his health. Separate the medicine from that further end, and it is not at all desired.

An *ultimate* end is that which the agent seeks in what he does for his *own* sake; what he loves, values, and takes pleasure in on its own account, and not merely as a means of a further end. As when a man loves the taste of some particular

sort of fruit, and is at pains and cost to obtain it, for the sake of the pleasure of that taste which he values upon its own account, as he loves his own pleasure; and not merely for the sake of any other good which he supposes his enjoying that pleasure will be the means of.

Some ends are subordinate, not only as they are subordinated to an ultimate end; but also to another end that is itself but subordinate. Yea, there may be a succession or chain of many subordinate ends, one dependent on another, one sought for another; before you come to any thing that the agent aims at and seeks for its *own* sake. As when a man sells a garment to get money—to buy tools—to till his land—to obtain a crop—to supply him with food—to gratify the appetite. And he seeks to gratify his appetite on its *own* account, as what is grateful in itself. Here the end of his selling his garment to get money, is only a subordinate end; and it is not only subordinate to the *ultimate* end—gratifying his appetite—but to a *nearer* end—buying husbandry tools; and his obtaining these is only a subordinate end, being only for the sake of tilling land. And the tillage of land is an end not sought on its own account, but for the sake of the crop to be produced; and the crop produced is an end sought only for the sake of making bread; and bread is sought for the sake of the sake of gratifying the appetite.

Here gratifying the appetite is called the *ultimate* end; because it is the *last* in the chain where a man's aim rests, obtaining in that the thing finally aimed at. So whenever a man comes to that in which his desire terminates and rests, it being something valued on its *own* account, then he comes to an *ultimate* end, let the chain be longer or shorter; yea, if there be but one link or one step that he takes before he comes to this end. As when a man that loves honey puts it into his mouth for the sake of the pleasure of the taste, without aiming at any thing further. So that an end which an agent has in view, may be both his *immediate* and his *ultimate* end; his *next* and his *last* end. That end which is sought for the sake of itself, and not for the sake of a further end, is an ultimate end; there the aim of the agent stops and rests.

A thing sought *may* have the nature of an ultimate, and also of a subordinate end; as it may be sought partly on its own account, and partly for the sake of a further end. Thus a man, in what he does, may seek the love and respect of a particular person, partly on its own account, because it is in itself agreeable to men to be the objects of others' esteem and love; and partly because he hopes, through the friendship of that person, to have his assistance in other affairs; and so to be put under advantage for obtaining further ends.

A *chief* end, which is opposite to an *inferior* end, is something diverse from an ultimate end; it is most valued, and therefore most sought after by the agent in what he does. It is evident that to be an end *more* valued than another end, is not exactly the same thing as to be an end valued *ultimately*, or for its own sake. This will appear, if it be considered.

1. That two different ends may be both ultimate, and yet not be chief ends. They may be both valued for their *own* sake, and both sought in the same work or acts; and yet one valued more highly, and sought more than another. Thus a man may go a journey to obtain two different benefits or enjoyments, both which may be agreeable to him in *themselves* considered; and yet one may be much more agreeable than the other; and so be what he sets his heart *chiefly* upon. Thus a man may go a journey, partly to obtain the possession and enjoyment of a bride that is very dear to him; and partly to gratify his curiosity in looking in a telescope, or some new-invented and extraordinary optic glass; and the one not properly subordinate to the other; and therefore *both* may be *ultimate* ends. But yet obtaining his beloved bride may be his *chief* end; and the benefit of the optic glass his *inferior* end.

2. An ultimate end is not always the chief end, because some *subordinate* ends may be *more* valued and sought after than some *ultimate* ends. Thus for instance, a man may aim at two things in his journey; one to visit his friends, and another to receive a large sum of money. The latter may be but a *subordinate* end; he may not value the silver and gold on their *own* account, but only for pleasure, gratification, and honour; the money is valued only as a means of the other. But yet obtaining the money may be *more* valued, and so is a *higher* end of his journey than the pleasure of seeing his friends; though the latter is valued on its *own* account, and so is an *ultimate* end.

But here several things may be noted:

First, When it is said that some *subordinate* ends may be *more* valued than some *ultimate* ends, it is not supposed that ever a subordinate end is more valued than *that* to which it is subordinate. For that reason it is called a *subordinate* end, because it is valued and sought not for its own sake, but only in subordination to a *further* end. But yet a subordinate end may be valued more than some *other* ultimate end that it is not subordinate to. Thus for instance, a man goes a journey to receive a sum of money, only for the value of the pleasure and honour that the money may be a means of. In this case it is impossible that the *subordinate* end, *viz.* his having the money, should be *more* valued by him than the pleasure and honour

for which he values it. It would be absurd to suppose that he values the means more than the end, when he has no value for the means, but for the sake of the end of which it is the means. But yet he may value the money, though but a subordinate end, *more* than some *other ultimate* end to which it is not subordinate, and with which it has no connection. For instance, *more* than the comfort of a friendly visit, which was one ultimate end of his journey.

Secondly, The ultimate end is always *superior* to its subordinate end, and more valued by the agent, unless it be when the ultimate end entirely depends on the subordinate. If he has no other means by which to obtain his last end, then the subordinate may be *as much* valued as the last end; because the last end, in such a case, altogether depends upon, and is wholly and certainly conveyed by it. As for instance, if a pregnant woman has a peculiar appetite to a certain rare fruit that is to be found only in the garden of a particular friend of hers, at a distance—and she goes a journey to her friend's house or garden, to obtain that fruit—the *ultimate* end of her journey is to gratify that strong appetite; the obtaining that fruit, is the *subordinate* end of it. If she looks upon it, that the appetite can be gratified by *no other* means than the obtaining of that fruit, and that it will *certainly* be gratified if she obtain it, then she will value the fruit *as much* as she values the gratification of her appetite. But otherwise, it will not be so. If she be *doubtful* whether that fruit will satisfy her craving, then she will not value it *equally* with the gratification of her appetite itself. Or if there be some *other fruit* that she knows of, that will gratify her desire, at least *in part*, which she can obtain without such trouble as shall countervail the gratification—or if her appetite cannot be gratified without this fruit, nor yet with it *alone*, without something else to be compounded with it—then her *value* for her last end will be *divided* between these several ingredients, as so many subordinate ends, and no *one alone* will be equally valued with the last end. Hence it rarely happens, that a subordinate end is *equally* valued with its last end; because the obtaining of a last end rarely depends on *one* single, uncompounded means, and infallibly connected with it. Therefore men's *last* ends are *commonly* their *highest* ends.

Thirdly, If any being has but *one* ultimate end in all that he does, and there be a great variety of operations, his *last* end may justly be looked upon as his *supreme* end. For in such a case, *every other* end but that one, is in order to that end; and therefore no other can be superior to it. Because, as was observed before, a snbordinate end is never *more* valued than the end to which it is subordinate. Moreover, the subordinate effects or events brought to pass as means of this end,

all uniting to contribute their share towards obtaining the one last end, are very various; and therefore, by what has been now observed, the ultimate end of all must be valued more than any one of the particular means. This seems to be the case with the works of God, as may more fully appear in the sequel.

Fourthly, Whatsoever any agent has in view in any thing he does which is agreeable to him *in itself*, and not merely for the sake of something else, is regarded by that agent as his *last* end. The same may be said of avoiding that which is in itself painful or disagreeable; for the avoiding of what is disagreeable is agreeable. This will be evident to any bearing in mind the meaning of the terms. By *last* end being meant, that which is regarded and sought by an agent, as agreeable or desirable for its *own* sake; a *subordinate* that which is sought only for the sake of something *else*.

Fifthly, From hence it will follow, that, if an agent has in view *more things than one* that will be brought to pass by what he does, which he loves and delights in on their *own* account, then he must have *more things than one* that he regards as his *last* ends in what he does. But if there be *but one thing* that an agent seeks on its *own* account, then there can be *but one* last end which he has in all his actions and operations.

But only here a distinction must be observed of things which may be said to be *agreeable* to an agent, in *themselves* considered: (1.) What is in itself grateful to an agent, and valued on its own account, *simply* and *absolutely* considered; antecedent to, and *independent* of all conditions, or any supposition of particular cases and circumstances. And, (2.) What may be said to be in itself agreeable to an agent, *hypothetically* and consequentially; or on supposition of such and such circumstances, or on the happening of such a particular case.

Thus, for instance, a man may originally love society. An inclination to society may be implanted in his very nature; and society may be agreeable to him *antecedent* to all presupposed cases and circumstances; and this may cause him to seek a family. And the comfort of society may be originally his *last* end, in seeking a family. But after he has a family, peace, good order, and mutual justice and friendship in his family, may be agreeable to him, and what he delights in for their *own* sake; and therefore these things may be his *last* end in many things he does in the government and regulation of his family. But they were not his *original* end with respect to his family. The justice and the peace of a family was not properly his last end *before* he had a family, that induced him to seek a family, but consequentially: And the case being put of his having a family, then these things wherein the good order and

beauty of a family consist, become his last end in many things he does in such circumstances.

In like manner we must suppose that God *before* he created the world, had some good in view as a consequence of the world's existence, that was *originally* agreeable to him in itself considered, that inclined him to bring the universe into existence in such a manner as he created it. But *after* the world was created, and such and such intelligent creatures actually had existence, in such and such circumstances, then a wise, just regulation of them was agreeable to God, *in itself* considered. And God's love of justice, and hatred of injustice, would be sufficient in such a case to induce God to deal *justly* with his creatures, and to prevent all injustice in him towards them. But yet there is no necessity of supposing, that God's love of doing justly to intelligent beings and hatred of the contrary, was what *originally* induced God to create the world, and make intelligent beings ; and so to order the occasion of doing either justly or unjustly. The justice of God's nature makes a just regulation agreeable, and the contrary disagreeable, as there is occasion ; the *subject* being supposed, and the *occasion* given. But we must suppose something else that should incline him to *create* the subjects, or *order* the occasion.

So that perfection of God which we call his faithfulness, or his inclination to fulfil his promises to his creatures, could not properly be what *moved* him to create the world ; nor could such a fulfilment of his promises to his creatures be his *last* end in giving the creatures being. But yet *after* the world is created, *after* intelligent creatures are made, and God has bound himself by promise to them, then that disposition which is called his faithfulness, may move him in his providential disposals toward them ; and this may be the *end* of many of God's works of providence, even the exercise of his faithfulness in fulfilling his promises, and may be in the *lower* sense his *last* end ; because faithfulness and truth must be supposed to be what is in *itself* amiable to God, and what he delights in for its *own* sake. Thus God may have ends of particular works of Providence, which are ultimate ends in a lower sense, which are not ultimate ends of the creation.

So that here we have two sorts of ultimate ends ; one of which may be called original and independent, the other consequential and dependent ; for it is evident, the latter sort are truly of the nature of ultimate ends ; because though their being agreeable to the agent be consequential on the existence, yet the subject and occasion being supposed, they are agreeable and amiable in themselves. We may suppose that to a righteous Being, doing justice between two parties

with whom he is concerned, is agreeable in *itself*, and not merely for the sake of some *other* end: And yet we may suppose, that a desire of doing justice between two parties, may be consequential on the being of those parties, and the occasion given.—It may be observed, that when I speak of God's ultimate end in the creation of the world in the following discourse, I commonly mean in that *highest* sense, viz. the *original* ultimate end.

Sixthly, It may be further observed, that the original ultimate end or ends of the creation of the world is *alone* that which induces God to give the occasion for consequential ends, by the first creation of the world, and the original disposal of it. And the more original the end is, the more extensive and universal it is. That which God had *primarily* in view in creating, and the *original* ordination of the world, must be constantly kept in view, and have a governing influence in all God's works, or with respect to every thing he does towards his creatures. And therefore,

Seventhly, If we use the phrase ultimate end in this highest sense, then the same that is God's ultimate end in creating the world, if we suppose but one such end, must be what he makes his ultimate aim in all his works, in every thing he does either in creation or Providence. But we must suppose, that in the *use* to which God puts his creatures, he must evermore have a regard to the *end* for which he has made them. But if we take *ultimate end* in the other *lower* sense, God may sometimes have regard to those things as ultimate ends, in particular works of Providence, which could not in any proper sense be his *last* end in creating the world.

Eighthly, On the other hand, whatever appears to be God's ultimate end in any sense, of his works of Providence *in general;* that must be the ultimate end of the work of *creation* itself. For though God may act for an end that is ultimate in a lower sense, in *some* of his works of Providence, which is not the ultimate end of the creation of the world, yet this doth not take place with regard to the works of Providence *in general;* for God's works of Providence in general, are the *same* with the *general use* to which he puts the world he has made. And we may well argue from what we see of the general *use* which God makes of the world, to the general *end* for which he designed the world. Though there may be some ends of particular works of Providence, that were not the *last* end of the creation, which are in themselves grateful to God in such particular emergent circumstances, and so are last ends in an inferior sense; yet this is only in certain cases, or particular occasions. But if they are last ends of God's proceedings in the use of the world *in general*, this

shows that his making them last ends do not depend on particular cases and circumstances, but the nature of things in general, and his general design in the being and constitution of the universe.

Ninthly, If there be but *one thing* that is originally, and independent on any future supposed cases, agreeable to God, to be obtained by the creation of the world, then there can be *but one last end* of God's work, in this highest sense. But if there are *various* things, properly diverse one from another, that are absolutely and independently agreeable to the divine Being, which are actually obtained by the creation of the world, then there were *several* ultimate ends of the creation in that highest sense.

CHAP. I.

Wherein is considered, what Reason teaches concerning this Affair.

SECT. I.

Some Things observed in general, which Reason dictates.

Having observed these things, to prevent confusion, I now proceed to consider what *may* and what may *not*, be supposed to be God's ultimate end in the creation of the world.

Indeed this affair seems properly to be an affair of divine revelation. In order to be determined what was designed in the creating of the astonishing fabric of the universe we behold, it becomes us to attend to, and rely on, what HE has told us, who was the architect. He best knows his own heart, and what his own ends and designs were, in the wonderful works which he has wrought. Nor is it to be supposed that mankind—who, while destitute of revelation, by the utmost improvements of their own reason, and advances in science and philosophy, could come to no clear and established determination who the *author* of the world was—would ever have obtained any tolerable settled judgment of the *end* which the author of it proposed to himself in so vast, complicated, and wonderful a work of his hands. And though it be true, that the revelation which God has given to men, as a light shining in a dark place, has been the occasion of great improvement of their faculties, and has taught men how to use their reason; and though mankind now, through the long continued assistance they have had by this divine light, have come to

great attainments in the habitual exercise of reason; yet I confess it would be relying too much on reason, to determine the affair of God's last end in the creation of the world, without being herein *principally* guided by divine revelation, since God has given a revelation containing instructions concerning this very matter. Nevertheless, as objections have chiefly been made against what I think the scriptures have truly revealed, from the pretended dictates of reason, I would, in the *first* place, soberly consider in a few things, what seems rational to be supposed concerning this affair;—and *then* proceed to consider what light divine revelation gives us in it.

As to the *first* of these, I think the following things appear to be the dictates of reason:

1. That no notion of God's last end in the creation of the world is agreeable to reason, which would truly imply any indigence, insufficiency, and mutability in God; or any dependence of the Creator on the creature, for any part of his perfection or happiness. Because it is evident, by both scripture and reason, that God is infinitely, eternally, unchangeably, and independently glorious and happy: that he cannot be profited by, or receive any thing from the creature; or be the subject of any sufferings, or diminution of his glory and felicity from any other being. The notion of God creating the world, in order to receive any thing properly from the creature, is not only contrary to the nature of God, but inconsistent with the notion of creation; which implies a being receiving its existence, and all that belongs to it out of nothing. And this implies the most perfect, absolute, and universal derivation and dependence. Now, if the creature receives its ALL from God, entirely and perfectly, how is it possible that *it* should have any thing to add to God, to make him in any respect more than he was before, and so the Creator become dependent on the creature?

2. Whatsoever is good and valuable *in itself*, is worthy that God should value it with an *ultimate* respect. It is therefore worthy to be made the *last end* of his operation; if it be properly *capable* of being attained. For it may be supposed that some things, valuable and excellent in themselves, are not properly capable of being *attained* in any divine operation; because their existence, in all possible respects, must be conceived of as *prior* to any divine operation. Thus God's existence and infinite perfection, though infinitely valuable in themselves, cannot be supposed to be the *end* of any divine operation; for we cannot conceive of them as, in any respect, *consequent* on any works of God. But whatever is *in itself valuable*, absolutely so, and is *capable* of being sought and *attained*, is worthy to be made a last end of the divine operation.—Therefore,

3. Whatever that be which is *in itself* most valuable, and was so originally, prior to the creation of the world, and which is *attainable* by the creation, if there be any thing which was superior in value to all others, *that* must be worthy to be God's *last* end in the creation; and also worthy to be his *highest* end. In consequence of this it will follow,

4. That if God *himself* be, in *any respect*, properly *capable* of being his own end in the creation of the world, then it is reasonable to suppose that he had respect to *himself*, as his last and highest end, in this work; because he is *worthy* in himself to be so, being infinitely the greatest and best of beings. All things else, with regard to worthiness, importance and excellence, are perfectly as nothing in comparison of him. And therefore, if God has respect to things according to their nature and proportions, he must necessarily have the greatest respect to himself. It would be against the perfection of his nature, his wisdom, holiness, and perfect rectitude, whereby he is disposed to do every thing that is fit to be done, to suppose otherwise. At least a great part of the moral rectitude of God whereby he is disposed to every thing that is fit, suitable, and amiable in itself, consists in his having the highest regard to that which is in itself highest and best. The moral rectitude of God must consist in a due respect to things that are objects of moral respect; that is, to intelligent beings capable of moral actions and relations. And therefore it must chiefly consist in giving due respect to that Being to whom most is due; for God is infinitely the most worthy of regard. The worthiness of others is as nothing to his; so that to him belongs all possible respect. To him belongs the *whole* of the respect that any intelligent being is capable of. To him belongs ALL the heart. Therefore, if moral rectitude of heart consists in paying the respect of the heart which is due, or which fitness and suitableness requires, fitness requires infinitely the greatest regard to be paid to God; and the denying of supreme regard here would be a conduct infinitely the most unfit. Hence it will follow, that the moral rectitude of the disposition, inclination, or affection of God CHIEFLY consists in a regard to HIMSELF, infinitely above his regard to all other beings; or, in other words, his holiness consists in this.

And if it be thus fit that God should *have* a supreme regard to himself, then it is fit that this supreme regard should *appear* in those things by which he makes himself known, or by his *word* and *works*, i. e. in what he *says*, and in what he *does*. If it be an infinitely amiable thing in God, that he should have a supreme regard to himself, then it is an amiable thing that he should *act* as having a chief regard to himself; or act in such a manner, as to *shew* that he has such a regard: that what is highest in God's *heart*, may be highest in his

actions and *conduct*. And if it was God's intention, as there is great reason to think it was, that his *works* should exhibit an *image* of himself their author, that it might brightly appear by his works what manner of being he is, and afford a proper representation of his divine excellencies, and especially his *moral* excellence, consisting in the *disposition of his heart*; then it is reasonable to suppose that his works are so wrought as to *shew* this supreme respect to himself, wherein his moral excellence primarily consists.

When we are considering what would be most fit for God *chiefly* to respect, with regard to the universality of things, it may help us to judge with greater ease and satisfaction, to consider, what we can *suppose* would be determined by some third being of perfect wisdom and rectitude, that should be perfectly indifferent and disinterested. Or if we make the supposition, that infinitely wise justice and rectitude were a distinct disinterested person, whose office it was to determine how things shall be most properly ordered in the whole kingdom of existence, including king and subjects, God and his creatures; and, upon a view of the whole, to decide what regard should prevail in all proceedings. Now such a judge, in adjusting the proper measures and kinds of regard, would weigh things in an even balance; taking care, that a greater part of the whole should be more respected, than the lesser, in proportion (other things being equal) to the measure of existence. So that the *degree of regard* should always be in a *proportion compounded* of the *proportion* of *existence*, and *proportion* of *excellence*, or according to the degree of *greatness* and *goodness*, considered *conjunctly*. Such an arbiter, in considering the system of *created* intelligent beings by itself, would determine, that the *system in general*, consisting of many millions, was of greater importance, and worthy of a greater share of regard, than only one individual. For, however considerable some of the individuals might be, no one exceeds others so much as to countervail all the system. And if this judge consider not only the system of created beings, but the system of *being in general*, comprehending the *sum total* of universal existence, both Creator and creature; still every part must be considered according to its importance, or the measure it has of *existence* and *excellence*. To determine then, what proportion or regard is to be alloted to the Creator, and all his creatures taken together, both must be as it were put in the balance; the *supreme Being*, with all in him that is great and excellent, is to be compared with all that is to be found in the *whole creation*: and according as the former is found to outweigh, in such proportion is he to have a greater share of regard. And in this case, as the whole system of created beings, in comparison of the Creator, would

be found as the light dust of the balance, or even as nothing and vanity; so the arbiter must determine accordingly with respect to the *degree* in which God should be regarded, by all intelligent existence, in all actions and proceedings, determinations and effects whatever, whether creating, preserving, using, disposing, changing, or destroying. And as the Creator is infinite, and has all possible existence, perfection and excellence, so he must have all possible regard. As he is every way the first and supreme, and as his excellency is in all respects the supreme beauty and glory, the original good, and fountain of all good; so he must have in all respects the supreme regard. And as he is *God over all*, to whom all are properly subordinate, and on whom all depend, worthy to reign as Supreme Head, with absolute and universal dominion; so it is *fit* that he should be so regarded by all, and in all proceedings and effects through the whole system: The universality of things, in their whole compass and series, should look to him, in such a manner, as that respect to him should reign over all respect to other things, and regard to creatures should, universally, be subordinate and subject.

When I speak of regard to be thus adjusted in the universal system, I mean the regard of the *sum total;* all intelligent existence, created, and uncreated. For it is fit, that the regard of the *Creator*, should be proportioned to the worthiness of objects, as well as the regard of creatures. Thus, we must conclude, that such an arbiter as I have supposed, would determine, that the whole universe, in all its actings, proceedings, revolutions, and entire series of events, should proceed with a view to *God*, as the supreme and last end; that every wheel, in all its rotations, should move with a constant invariable regard to him as the ultimate end of all; as perfectly and uniformly, as if the whole system were animated and directed by one common soul. Or, as if such an arbiter as I have before supposed, possessed of perfect wisdom and rectitude, became the common soul of the universe, and actuated and governed it in all its motions.

Thus I have gone upon the supposition of a third disinterested person. The thing supposed is impossible; but the case is, nevertheless, just the same, as to what is most fit and suitable in itself. For it is most certainly proper for God to act, according to the greatest *fitness*, and he knows what the greatest fitness is, as much as if perfect rectitude were a distinct person to direct him. God himself is possessed of that perfect discernment and rectitude which have been supposed. It belongs to him as supreme arbiter, and to his infinite wisdom and rectitude, to state all rules and measures of proceedings. And seeing these attributes of God are infinite, and most abso-

lutely perfect, they are not the less fit to order and dispose, because they are in him, who is a being concerned, and not a third person that is disinterested. For being *interested*, unfits a person to be an arbiter or judge, no otherwise, than as interest tends to mislead his judgment, or incline him to act contrary to it. But that God should be in danger of either, is contrary to the supposition of his being absolutely perfect. And as there must be *some* supreme Judge of fitness and propriety in the universality of things, or otherwise there could be no order, it therefore belongs to God, whose are all things, who is perfectly fit for this office, and who alone is so, to state all things according to the most perfect fitness and rectitude, as much as if perfect rectitude were a distinct person. We may therefore be sure it is and will be done.

I should think that these things might incline us to suppose, that God has not forgot himself, in the ends which he proposed in the creation of the world; but that he has so stated these ends, (however self-sufficient, immutable and independent,) as therein plainly to shew a supreme regard to himself. Whether this can be, or whether God has done thus, must be considered afterwards, as also what may be objected against this view of things.

5. Whatsoever is good, amiable, and valuable *in itself*, *absolutely* and *originally* (which facts and events shew that God aimed at in the creation of the world,) must be supposed to be regarded, or aimed at by God *ultimately*, or as an ultimate end of creation. For we must suppose, from the perfection of God's nature, that whatsoever is valuable and amiable in itself, simply and absolutely considered, God values simply for itself; because God's judgment and esteem are according to truth. But if God values a thing simply and absolutely on its own account, then it is the *ultimate* object of his value. For to suppose that he values it only for some *farther* end, is in direct contradiction to the present supposition, which is, that he values it absolutely, and for itself. Hence it most clearly follows, that if that which God values *for itself* appears, in fact and experience, to be what he seeks by any thing he does, he must regard it as an *ultimate* end. And therefore, if he seeks it in creating the world, or any part of the world, it is an ultimate end of the work of creation. Having got thus far, we may now proceed a step farther and assert,

6. Whatsoever thing is *actually* the *effect* of the creation of the world, which is simply and absolutely valuable in itself, that thing is an ultimate end of God's creating the world. We see that it is a good which God *aimed* at by the creation of the world; because he has *actually attained* it by that means. For we may justly infer what God *intends*, by what he actually *does*; because he does nothing inadvertently, or with-

out design. But whatever God *intends* to attain, from a value for it, in his actions and works, that he *seeks* in those acts and works. Because, for an agent to *intend* to attain something he values by the means he uses, is the same thing as to *seek* it by those means. And this is the same as to make that thing his *end* in those means. Now, it being, by the supposition, what God *values ultimately*, it must therefore, by the preceding position, be *aimed at* by God, as an ultimate end of creating the world.

SECT. II.

Some farther Observations concerning those things which Reason leads us to suppose God aimed at in the Creation of the World.

From what was last observed, it *seems* to be the most proper way of proceeding—as we would see what light *reason* will give us, respecting the particular end, or ends God had ultimately in view in the creation of the world—to consider what thing or things are *actually* the effect or *consequence* of the creation of the world, that are simply and originally valuable in themselves. And this is what I would directly proceed to, without entering on any tedious metaphysical enquiries, wherein fitness or amiableness consists; referring what I say to the dictates of the reader's mind, on sedate and calm reflection.

1. It seems a thing in itself proper and desirable, that the glorious attributes of God, which consist in a *sufficiency* to certain acts and effects, should be *exerted* in the production of such effects as might manifest his infinite power, wisdom, righteousness, goodness, &c. If the world had not been created, these attributes never would have had any *exercise*. The *power* of God which is a sufficiency in him to produce great effects, must for ever have been dormant and useless as to any effect. The divine *wisdom* and prudence would have had no exercise in any wise contrivance, any prudent proceeding, or disposal of things; for there would have been no objects of contrivance or disposal. The same might be observed of God's *justice*, *goodness*, and *truth*. Indeed God might have *known* as perfectly that he possessed these attributes, if they never had been exerted or expressed in any effect. But then, if the attributes which consist in a *sufficiency* for correspondent effects are in themselves excellent, the *exercises* of them must likewise be excellent. If it be an excellent thing, that there should be a sufficiency for a certain kind of action or operation, the excellency of such a sufficiency must consist in its *relation* to this kind of operation or effect; but that could not be, unless the *operation itself*

were excellent. A sufficiency for any work is no farther valuable, than the work itself is valuable.* As God therefore esteems these attributes *themselves* valuable, and delights in them; so it is natural to suppose that he delights in their proper *exercise* and expression. For the same reason that he esteems his own sufficiency wisely to *contrive* and dispose effects, he also will esteem the wise *contrivance* and disposition itself. And for the same reason, as he delights in his own disposition to do justly, and to dispose of things according to truth and just proportion; so he must delight in such a righteous disposal itself.

2. It seems to be a thing in itself fit and desirable, that the glorious perfections of God should be *known*, and the operations and expressions of them seen, by *other beings* besides himself. If it be fit that God's power and wisdom, &c. should be exercised and *expressed* in some effects, and not lie eternally dormant, then it seems proper that these exercises should *appear*, and not be totally hidden and unknown. For if they are, it will be just the same, as to the above purpose, as if they were not. God as perfectly knew himself and his perfections, had as perfect an idea of the exercises and effects they were sufficient for, *antecedently* to any such actual operations of them, and since. If therefore, it be nevertheless a thing in itself valuable, and worthy to be desired, that these glorious perfections be actually *exhibited* in their correspondent effects; then it seems also, that the *knowledge* of these perfections and discoveries is valuable in itself absolutely considered; and that it is *desirable* that this knowledge should exist. It is a thing infinitely good in itself, that God's glory should be *known* by a glorious society of created beings. And that there should be in them an *increasing* knowledge of God to all eternity, is worthy to be regarded by him, to whom it belongs to order what is fittest and best. If *existence* is more worthy than defect and nonentity, and if any *created* existence is in itself worthy to be, then *knowledge* is; and if any knowledge, then the most *excellent sort* of knowledge, *viz.* that of God and his glory. This knowledge is one of the highest, most real, and substantial parts of all created existence, most remote from nonentity and defect.

3. As it is desirable in itself that God's glory should be known, so when known it seems equally reasonable it should

* "The *end* of wisdom (says Mr. G. Tennent, in his Sermon at the opening of the presbyterian church of Philadelphia) is *design*; the *end* of power is *action*; the *end* of goodness is *doing* good. To suppose these perfections not to be *exerted* would be to represent them as insignificant. Of what use would God's *wisdom* be, if it had nothing to design or direct? To what purpose his *almightiness*, if it never brought any thing to pass? And of what avail his *goodness*, if it never did any good?"

be esteemed and delighted in, answerably to its dignity. There is no more reason to esteem it a suitable thing, that there should be an idea in the *understanding* corresponding unto the glorious object, than that there should be a corresponding *affection* in the will. If the perfection itself be excellent, the knowledge of it is excellent, and so is the esteem and love of it excellent. And as it is fit that God should love and esteem his own *excellence*, it is also fit that he should value and esteem the *love* of his excellency. And if it becomes a being highly to *value* himself, it is fit that he should love to have himself *valued* and esteemed. If the idea of God's perfection in the understanding be valuable, then the love of the heart seems to be more especially valuable, as moral beauty especially consists in the disposition and affection of the heart.

4. As there is an infinite fulness of all possible good in God—a fulness of every perfection, of all excellency and beauty, and of infinite happiness—and as this fulness is capable of communication, or emanation *ad extra;* so it seems a thing amiable and valuable in *itself* that this infinite fountain of good should send forth abundant streams. And as this is in itself excellent, so a *disposition* to this in the divine being, must be looked upon as an *excellent* disposition. Such an emanation of good is, in some sense, a *multiplication* of it. So far as the stream may be looked upon as any thing besides the fountain, so far it may be looked on as an *increase* of good. And if the fulness of good that is in the fountain, is in itself excellent, then the emanation, which is as it were an increase, repetition, or multiplication of it, is excellent. Thus it is fit, since there is an infinite fountain of light and knowledge, that this light should shine forth in beams of communicated knowledge and understanding: and as there is an infinite fountain of holiness, moral excellence and beauty, that so it should flow out in communicated holiness. And that, as there is an infinite fulness of joy and happiness, so these should have an emanation, and become a fountain flowing out in abundant streams, as beams from the sun.

Thus it appears reasonable to suppose that it was God's last end, that there might be a glorious and abundant emanation of his infinite fulness of good *ad extra*, or without himself; and that the disposition to communicate himself, or diffuse his own FULNESS,* was what moved him to create the world. But here I observe, that there would be some impropriety in saying that a disposition in God to communicate

* I shall often use the phrase *God's fulness*, as signifying and comprehending all the good which is in God natural and moral, either excellence or happiness; partly because I know of no better phrase to be used in this general meaning; and partly because I am led hereto by some of the inspired writers, particularly the apostle Paul, who often useth the phrase in this sense,

himself *to the creature*, moved him to create the world. For an inclination in God to communicate himself to an *object*, seems to presuppose the *existence* of the object, at least in idea. But the diffusive disposition that excited God to give creatures existence, was rather a communicative *disposition* in general, or a disposition in the fulness of the divinity to flow out and diffuse itself. Thus the disposition there is in the root and stock of a tree to diffuse sap and life, is doubtless the reason of their communication to its buds, leaves and fruits, *after* these exist. But a disposition to communicate of its life and sap to its *fruits*, is not so properly the cause of its *producing* those fruits, as its disposition to diffuse its sap and life in general. Therefore, to speak strictly according to truth, we may suppose, *that a disposition in God, as an original property of his nature, to an emanation of his own infinite fulness, was what excited him to create the world; and so, that the emanation itself was aimed at by him as a last end of the creation.*

SECT. III.

Wherein it is considered how, on the supposition of God's making the forementioned things his last end, he manifests a supreme and ultimate regard to himself in all his works.

In the last section I observed some things which are actually the consequence of the creation of the world, which seem absolutely valuable in themselves, and so worthy to be made God's last end in his work. I now proceed to enquire, how God's making such things as these his last end, is consistent with his making *himself* his last end, or his manifesting an ultimate respect to himself in his acts and works.—Because it is agreeable to the dictates of reason, that in all his proceedings he should set himself highest; therefore I would endeavour to show, how his infinite love to, and delight in himself, will naturally cause him to value and delight in these things: or rather, how a value to these things is implied in his value of that infinite fulness of good that is in himself.

Now with regard to the first of the particulars mentioned above—God's regard to the *exercise* of those attributes of his nature, in their proper operations and effects, which consist in a *sufficiency* for these operations—it is not hard to conceive that God's regard to *himself*, and value for his own perfections, should cause him to value these exercises and expressions of his perfections; inasmuch as their excellency consists

in their relation to use, exercise, and operation. God's love to himself, and his own attributes, will therefore make him delight in that which is the use, end, and operation of these attributes. If one highly esteem and delight in the virtues of a friend, as wisdom, justice, &c. that have relation to action, this will make him delight in the *exercise* and genuine *effects* of these virtues. So if God both esteem and delight in his own perfections and virtues, he cannot but value and delight in the expressions and genuine effects of them. So that in delighting in the *expressions* of his perfections, he manifests a delight in himself; and in making these expressions of his own perfections his end, *he makes himself his end.*

And with respect to the second and third particulars, the matter is no less plain. For he that loves any being, and has a disposition highly to prize and greatly to delight in his virtues and perfections, must from the same disposition be well pleased to have his excellencies known, acknowledged, esteemed, and prized by others. He that loves any thing, naturally loves the *approbation* of that thing, and is opposite to the disapprobation of it. Thus it is when one loves the virtues of a friend. And thus it will necessarily be, if a being loves himself and highly prizes his own excellencies; and thus it is *fit* it should be, if it be fit he should thus love himself, and prize his own valuable qualities; that is, it is fit that he should take delight in his own excellencies being seen, acknowledged, esteemed, and delighted in. This is implied in a love to himself and his own perfections; and in making *this* his end, he makes himself his end.

And with respect to the fourth and last particular, viz. God's being disposed to an abundant communication and glorious emanation of that infinite fulness of good which he possesses, as of his own knowledge, excellency, and happiness, in the manner he does; if we thoroughly consider the matter it will appear, that herein also God makes himself his end, in such a sense, as plainly to manifest and testify a supreme and ultimate regard to himself.

Merely in this *disposition* to cause an emanation of his glory and fulness—which is prior to the existence of any other being, and is to be considered as the inciting cause of giving existence to other beings—God cannot so properly be said to make the *creature* his end, as *himself.* For the creature is not as yet considered as existing. This dispositon or desire in God, must be *prior* to the existence of the creature, even in foresight. For it is a disposition that is the original ground even of the future, intended, and foreseen existence of the creature. God's benevolence, as it respects the creature, may be taken either in a larger or stricter sense. In a larger sense, it may signify nothing diverse from that good disposi-

tion in his nature to communicate of his own fulness in general; as his knowledge, his holiness, and happiness; and to give creatures existence in order to it. This may be called benevolence, or love, because it is the same good disposition that is exercised in love. It is the very fountain from whence love originally proceeds, when taken in the most proper senses and it has the same general tendency and effect in the creature; well-being. But yet this cannot have any particular present or future created existence for its object; because it is prior to any such object, and the very source of the futurition of its existence. Nor is it really diverse from God's love to himself; as will more clearly appear afterwards.

But God's love may be taken, more strictly, for this general disposition to communicate good, as directed to *particular objects*. Love, in the most strict and proper sense, *presupposes* the existence of the object beloved, at least in idea and expectation, and represented to the mind as future. God did not love angels in the strictest sense, but in consequence of his intending to create them, and so having an idea of future existing angels. Therefore his love to them was not properly what *excited* him to *intend* to create them. Love or benevolence, strictly taken, presupposes an *existing* object, as much as pity a miserable suffering object.

This propensity in God to diffuse himself, may be considered as a propensity to himself diffused; or to his own glory existing in its emanation. A respect to himself, or an infinite propensity to, and delight in his own glory, is that which causes him to incline to its being abundantly diffused, and to delight in the emanation of it. Thus that nature in a tree, by which it puts forth buds, shoots out branches, and brings forth leaves and fruit, is a disposition that terminates in its own complete self. And so the disposition in the sun to shine, or abundantly to diffuse its fulness, warmth, and brightness, is only a tendency to its own most glorious and complete state. So God looks on the communication of himself, and the emanation of his infinite glory, to belong to the fulness and completeness of himself; as though he were not in his most glorious state without it. Thus the church of Christ, (toward whom, and in whom are the emanations of his glory, and the communication of his fulness,) is called the *fulness of Christ;* as though he were not in his complete state without her; like Adam without Eve. And the church is called the glory of Christ, as the woman is the glory of the man, 1 Cor. xi. 7.—Isa. xlvi. 13. "I will place salvation in Zion, for Israel MY GLORY."* Indeed, after the creatures are *intended* to be crea-

* Very remarkable is that place, John xii. 23, 24. "And Jesus answered them, saying, The hour is come, that the son of man should be glorified. Verily, I say unto you, except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth

ted, God may be conceived of as being moved by benevolence to them, in the strictest sense, in his dealings with them. His exercising his goodness, and gratifying his benevolence to them in particular, may be the spring of all God's proceedings through the universe; as being now the determined way of gratifying his general inclination to diffuse himself. Here God acting for *himself*, or making himself his last end, and his acting for *their* sake, are not to be set in opposition; they are rather to be considered as coinciding one with the other, and implied one in the other. But yet God is to be considered as first and original in his regard; and the creature is the object of God's regard consequently, and by implication, as being as it were comprehended in God; as shall be more particularly observed presently.

But how God's value for, and delight in, the emanations of his fulness in the work of creation, argues his delight in the infinite fulness of good in himself, and the supreme regard he has for himself; and that in making these emanations he ultimately makes himself his end in creation, will more clearly appear by considering more particularly the nature and circumstances of these communications of God's fulness.

One part of that divine fulness which is communicated, is the divine *knowledge*. That communicated knowledge which must be supposed to pertain to God's last end in creating the world, is the creature's knowledge of HIM. For this is the end of all other knowledge; and even the faculty of understanding would be vain without it. And this knowledge is most properly a communication of God's infinite knowledge, which primarily consists in the knowledge of himself. God, in making *this* his end, makes *himself* his end. This knowledge in the creature is but a conformity to God. It is the image of God's own knowledge of himself. It is a participation of the same, though infinitely less in degree: as particular beams of the sun communicated, are the light and glory of the sun itself, in part.

Besides, God's glory is the object of this knowledge, or the thing known; so that God is glorified in it, as hereby his excellency is seen. As therefore God values himself, as he delights in his own knowledge; he must delight in every thing of

alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." Christ had respect herein to the blessed fruits of his death, in the conversion, salvation, and eternal happiness of those that should be redeemed by him. This consequence of his death he calls his glory and his obtaining this fruit he calls his being glorified; as the flourishing, beautiful produce of a corn of wheat sown in the ground is its glory. Without this, he is alone as Adam was before Eve was created. But from him, by his death, proceeds a glorious offspring; in which are communicated his fulness and glory: As from Adam, in his deep sleep, proceeds the woman, a beautiful companion to fill his emptiness, and relieve his solitariness; by Christ's death his fulness is abundantly diffused in many streams, and expressed in the beauty and glory of a great multitude of his spiritual offspring.

that nature: As he delights in his own light, he must delight in every beam of that light; and as he highly values his own excellency, he must be well pleased in having it *manifested* and so *glorified.*

Another emanation of divine fulness, is the communication of virtue and *holiness* to the creature: This is a communication of God's holiness; so that hereby the creature partakes of God's own moral excellency; which is properly the beauty of the divine nature. And as God delights in his own beauty, he must necessarily delight in the creature's holiness; which is a conformity to, and participation of it, as truly as the brightness of a jewel held in the sun's beams, is a participation or derivation of the sun's brightness, though immensely less in degree. And then it must be considered wherein this holiness in the creature consists, viz. in love, which is the comprehension of all true virtue; and primarily in love to God, which is exercised in an high esteem of God, admiration of his perfections, complacency in them, and praise of them. All which things are nothing else but the heart exalting, magnifying, or glorifying God; which, as I shewed before, God necessarily approves of, and is pleased with, as he loves himself, and values the glory of his own nature.

Another part of God's fulness which he communicates, is his *happiness*. This happiness consists in enjoying and rejoicing in himself; and so does also the creature's happiness. It is a participation of what is in God; and God and his glory are the objective ground of it. The happiness of the creature consists in rejoicing in God; by which also God is magnified and exalted. Joy, or the exulting of the heart in God's glory, is one thing that belongs to praise. So that God is all in all, with respect to each part of that communication of the divine fulness which is made to the creature. What is communicated is divine, or something of God; and each communication is of that nature, that the creature to whom it is made is thereby conformed to God, and united to him: and that in proportion as the communication is greater or less. And the communication itself is no other, in the very nature of it, than that wherein the very honour, exaltation, and praise of God consists.

And it is farther to be considered, that what God aimed at in the creation of the world, as the end which he had ultimately in view, was that communication of himself which he intended through all eternity. And if we attend to the nature and circumstances of this eternal emanation of divine good, it will more clearly shew now, in making this his end, God testifies a supreme respect to himself, and makes himself his end. There are many reasons to think what God has in view, in an

increasing communication of himself through eternity, is an *increasing* knowledge of God, love to him, and joy in him. And it is to be considered, that the more those divine communications *increase* in the creature, the more it becomes one with God: for so much the more is it united to God in love, the heart is drawn nearer and nearer to God, and the union with him becomes more firm and close: and, at the same time, the creature becomes more and more *conformed* to God. The image is more and more perfect, and so the good that is in the creature comes for ever nearer and nearer to an identity with that which is in God. In the view therefore of God, who has a comprehensive prospect of the increasing union and conformity through eternity, it must be an infinitely strict and perfect nearness, conformity, and oneness. For it will for ever come nearer and nearer to that strictness and perfection of union which there is between the Father and the Son. So that in the eyes of God, who perfectly sees the whole of it, in its infinite progress and increase, it must come to an eminent fulfilment of Christ's request, in John xvii. 21, 23. "That they all may be *one*, as thou Father art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be *one* in us; I in them and thou in me, that they may be made perfect *one*." In this view, those elect creatures, which must be looked upon as the end of all the rest of the creation, considered with respect to the whole of their eternal duration, and as such made God's end, must be viewed as being, as it were, one with God. They were respected as brought home to him, united with him, centering most perfectly, and as it were swallowed up in him: so that his respect to *them* finally coincides, and becomes one and the same, with respect to himself. The interest of the creature is, as it were, God's own interest, in proportion to the degree of their relation and union to God. Thus the interest of a man's *family* is looked upon as the same with his *own* interest; because of the relation they stand in to him; his propriety in them, and their strict union with him. But God's elect creatures, with respect to their eternal duration, are infinitely dearer to God, than a man's family is to him. What has been said shews, that as all things are *from* God, as their first cause and fountain; so all things tend *to* him, and in their progress come nearer and nearer to him through all eternity; which argues, that he who is their first cause is their last end.*

* This remark must be understood with limitation; as expressing the effect of *benevolent* influence, but not the effect of *justice* on a moral system. W.

SECT. IV.

Some objections considered, which may be made against the reasonableness of what has been said of God making himself his last end.

Object. I. Some may object against what has been said as being inconsistent with God's absolute independence and immutability: particularly, as though God were inclined to a communication of his fulness, and emanations of his own glory, as being his own most glorious and complete state. It may be thought that this does not well consist with God being self-existent from all eternity; absolutely perfect in himself, in the possession of infinite and independent good. And that, in general, to suppose that God makes himself his end, in the creation of the world, seems to suppose that he aims at some interest or happiness of his own, not easily reconcileable with his being perfectly and infinitely happy in himself. If it could be supposed that God needed any thing; or that the goodness of his creatures could extend to him; or that they could be profitable to him; it might be fit, that God should make himself, and his own interest, his highest and last end in creating the world. But seeing that God is above all need, and all capacity of being made better or happier in any respect; to what purpose should God make himself his end; or seek to advance himself in any respect by any of his works? How absurd is it to suppose that God should do such great things, with a view to obtain what he is already most perfectly possessed of, and was so from all eternity; and therefore cannot now possibly need, nor with any colour of reason be supposed to seek?

Answer 1. Many have wrong notions of God's happiness, as resulting from his absolute self-sufficience, independence, and immutability. Though it be true, that God's glory and happiness are in and of himself, are infinite and cannot be added to, and unchangeable, for the whole and every part of which he is perfectly independent of the creature; yet it does not hence follow, nor is it true, that God has no real and proper delight, pleasure or happiness, in any of his acts or communications relative to the creature, or effects he produces in them; or in any thing he sees in the creatures' qualifications, dispositions, actions and state.

God may have a real and proper pleasure or happiness in seeing the *happy state* of the creature; yet this may not be different from his delight in himself; being a delight in his own infinite goodness; or the exercise of that glorious propensity of his nature to diffuse and communicate himself, and

so gratifying this inclination of his own heart. This delight which God has in his creatures' happiness, cannot properly be said to be what God receives from the creature. For it is only the effect of his own work in, and communications to the creature; in making it, and admitting it to a participation of his fulness. As the sun receives nothing from the jewel that receives its light, and shines only by a participation of its brightness.

With respect also to the creature's *holiness;* God may have a proper delight and joy in imparting this to the creature, as gratifying hereby his inclination to communicate of his own excellent fulness. God may delight, with true and great pleasure, in beholding that beauty which is an image and communication of his own beauty, an expression and manifestation of his own loveliness. And this is so far from being an instance of his happiness not being in and from himself, that it is an evidence that he is happy in himself, or delights and has pleasure in his own beauty. If he did not take pleasure in the *expression* of his own beauty, it would rather be an evidence that he does not *delight* in his own beauty; that he hath not his happiness and enjoyment in his own beauty and perfection. So that if we suppose God has real pleasure and happiness in the holy love and praise of his saints, as the image and communication of his own holiness, it is not properly any pleasure distinct from the pleasure he has in himself: but it is truly an instance of it.

And with respect to God's being glorified in those perfections wherein his glory consists, expressed in their corresponding effects,—as his wisdom in wise designs and well contrived works, his power in great effects, his justice in acts of righteousness, his goodness in communicating happiness,—this does not argue that his pleasure is not in himself, and his own glory; but the contrary. It is the *necessary consequence* of his delighting in the glory of his nature, that he delights in the emanation and effulgence of it.

Nor do these things argue any *dependence* in God on the creature for happiness. Though he has real pleasure in the creature's holiness and happiness, yet this is not properly any pleasure which he receives from the creature. For these things are what he *gives* the creature. They are wholly and entirely from him. His rejoicing therein is rather a rejoicing in his own acts, and his own glory expressed in those acts, than a joy derived from the creature. God's joy is dependent on nothing besides his own act, which he exerts with an absolute and independent power. And yet, in some sense, it can be truly said, that God has the more delight and pleasure for the holiness and happiness of his creatures. Because God would be less happy, if he was less good: or if he had

not that perfection of nature which consists in a propensity of nature to diffuse his own fulness. And he would be less happy, if it were possible for him to be hindered in the exercise of his goodness, and his other perfections, in their proper effects. But he has complete happiness, because he has these perfections, and cannot be hindered in exercising and displaying them in their proper effects. And this surely is not because he is dependent; but because he is independent on any other that should hinder him.

From this view it appears, that nothing which has been said is in the least inconsistent with those expressions in scripture that signify, "man cannot be profitable to God," &c. For these expressions plainly mean no more than that God is absolutely independent of us; that we have nothing of our own, no stock from whence we can give to God: and that no part of his happiness originates from man.

From what has been said it appears, that the pleasure God hath in those things which have been mentioned, is rather a pleasure in diffusing, and *communicating* to, than in *receiving* from the creature. Surely it is no argument of indigence in God, that he is inclined to communicate of his infinite fulness. It is no argument of the emptiness or deficiency of a fountain, that it is inclined to overflow. Nothing from the creature alters God's happiness, as though it were changeable either by increase or diminution. For though these *communications* of God—these exercises, operations, and expressions of his glorious perfections which God rejoices in—are in time; yet his *joy* in them is without beginning or change. They were always equally present in the divine mind. He beheld them with equal clearness, certainty and fulness, in every respect, as he doth now. They were always equally present; as with him there is no variableness or succession. He ever beheld and enjoyed them perfectly in his own independent and immutable power and will.

Ans. 2. If any are not satisfied with the preceding answer, but still insist on the objection, let them consider whether they can devise any other scheme of God's last end in creating the world, but what will be equally obnoxious to this objection in its full force, if there be any force in it. For if God had any last end in creating the world, then there was something in some respect future, that he aimed at, and designed to bring to pass by creating the world; something that was agreeable to his inclination or will; let that be his own glory, or the happiness of his creatures, or what it will. Now, if there be something that God seeks as agreeable, or grateful to him, then, in the accomplishment of it, he is gratified. If the last end which he seeks in the creation of the world be truly a thing grateful to him, (as certainly it is, if it be truly his end, and truly the object

of his will,) then it is what he takes a real delight and pleasure in. But then, according to the argument of the objection, how can he have any thing future to desire or seek, who is already perfectly, eternally, and immutably satisfied in himself? What can remain for him to take any delight in, or to be further gratified by, whose eternal and unchangeable delight is in himself, as his own complete object of enjoyment? Thus the objector will be pressed with his own objection, let him embrace what notion he will of God's end in the creation. And I think he has no way left to answer but that which has been taken above.

It may therefore be proper here to observe, that let what will be God's last end, *that* he must have a real and proper pleasure in. Whatever be the proper object of his will, he is gratified in. And the thing is either grateful to him in itself, or for something else for which he wills it; and so is his further end. But whatever is God's last end, that he wills *for its own sake;* as grateful to him in itself, or in which he has some degree of true and proper pleasure. Otherwise we must deny any such thing as will in God with respect to any thing brought to pass in time; and so must deny his work of creation, or any work of his Providence to be truly voluntary. But we have as much reason to suppose that God's works in creating and governing the world are properly the fruits of his will, as of his understanding. And if there be any such thing at all, as what we mean by *acts of will* in God; then he is not indifferent whether his will be fulfilled or not. And if he is not indifferent, then he is truly gratified and pleased in the fulfilment of his will. And if he has a real *pleasure* in attaining his end, then the attainment of it belongs to his *happiness;* that in which God's delight or pleasure in any measure consists. To suppose that God has pleasure in things that are brought to pass in time, only figuratively and metaphorically, is to suppose that he exercises will about these things, and makes them his end only metaphorically.

Answ. 3. The doctrine that makes God's *creatures* and not *himself* to be his last end, is a doctrine the farthest from having a favourable aspect on God's absolute self-sufficience and independence. It far less agrees therewith than the doctrine against which this is objected. For we must conceive of the efficient as *depending* on his ultimate end. He depends on this end in his desires, aims, actions, and pursuits; so that he fails in all his desires, actions, and pursuits, if he fails of his end. Now if God himself be his last end, then in his dependence on his end he depends on nothing but himself. If all things be of him, and to him, and he the first and the last, this shews him to be all in all. He is all to himself. He goes not out of himself in what he seeks; but his desires and pursuits as

they originate from, so they terminate in himself; and he is dependent on none but himself in the beginning or end of any of his exercises or operations. But if not himself, but the creature, were his last end, then as he depends on his last end, he would be in some sort dependent on the creature.

Object. II. Some may object, that to suppose God makes himself his highest and last end, is dishonourable to him; as it in effect supposes that God does every thing from a selfish spirit. Selfishness is looked upon as mean and sordid in the creature; unbecoming and even hateful in such a worm of the dust as man. We should look upon a man as of a base and contemptible character, who should in every thing he did, be governed by selfish principles; should make his private interest his governing aim in all his conduct in life. How far then should we be from attributing any such thing to the supreme Being, the blessed and only Potentate! Does it not become us to ascribe to him the most noble and generous dispositions; and qualities the most remote from every thing private, narrow, and sordid?

Answer 1. Such an objection must arise from a very ignorant or inconsiderate notion of the vice of selfishness, and the virtue of generosity. If by selfishness be meant a disposition in any being to regard himself; this is no otherwise vicious or unbecoming, than as one is less than a multitude; and so the public weal is of greater value than his particular interest. Among created beings one single person is inconsiderable in comparison of the generality; and so his interest is of little importance compared with the interest of the whole system. Therefore in them, a disposition to prefer self, as if it were more than all, is exceeding vicious. But it is vicious on no other account, than as it is a disposition that does not agree with the nature of things; and that which is indeed the greatest good. And a disposition in any one to forego his own interest for the sake of others, is no further excellent, no further worthy the name of generosity, than it is treating things according to their true value; prosecuting something most worthy to be prosecuted; an expression of a disposition to prefer something to self-interest, that is indeed preferable in itself. But if God be indeed so great, and so excellent, that all other beings are as nothing to him, and all other excellency be as nothing, and less than nothing and vanity, in comparison of his; and God be omniscient and infallible, and perfectly knows that he is infinitely the most valuable being; then it is fit that his heart should be agreeable to this—which is indeed the true nature and proportion of things, and agreeable to this infallible and all-comprehending understanding which he has of them, and that perfectly clear light in which he views them

—and that he should value himself infinitely more than his creatures.

Ans. 2. In created beings, a regard to self-interest may properly be set in *opposition* to the public welfare; because the private interest of one person may be inconsistent with the public good; at least it may be so in the apprehension of that person. That which this person looks upon as his interest, may interfere with, or oppose the general good. Hence his private interest may be regarded and pursued in opposition to the public. But this cannot be with respect to the supreme Being, the author and head of the whole system; on whom all absolutely depend: who is the fountain of being and good to the whole. It is more absurd to suppose that his interest should be opposite to the interest of the universal system, than that the welfare of the head, heart, and vitals of the natural body, should be opposite to the welfare of the body. And it is impossible that God, who is omniscient, should apprehend his interest, as being inconsistent with the good and interest of the whole.

Ans. 3. God seeking himself in the creation of the world, in the manner which has been supposed, is so far from being inconsistent with the good of his creatures, that it is a kind of regard to himself that inclines him to seek the good of his creature. It is a regard to himself that disposes him to diffuse and communicate himself. It is such a delight in his own internal fulness and glory, that disposes him to an abundant effusion and emanation of that glory. The same disposition that inclines him to delight in his glory, causes him to delight in the exhibitions, expressions, and communications of it. If there were any person of such a taste and disposition of mind, that the brightness and light of the sun seemed unlovely to him, he would be willing that the sun's brightness and light should be retained within itself. But they that delight in it, to whom it appears lovely and glorious, will esteem it an amiable and glorious thing to have it diffused and communicated through the world.

Here, by the way, it may be properly considered whether some writers are not chargeable with inconsistence in this respect. They speak against the doctrine of GOD making himself his own highest and last end, as though this were an ignoble selfishness—when indeed he only is fit to be made the highest end, by himself and all other beings; in as much as he is infinitely greater and more worthy than all others—yet with regard to *creatures*, who are infinitely less worthy of supreme and ultimate regard, they suppose that they necessarily, at all times, seek their own happiness, and make it their ultimate end in all, even their most virtuous actions; and that this principle, regulated by wisdom and prudence, as leading to

that which is their true and highest happiness, is the foundation of all virtue, and every thing that is morally good and excellent in them.

Object. III. To what has been supposed, that God makes himself his end—in seeking that his glory and excellent perfections should be known, esteemed, loved, and delighted in by his creatures—it may be objected that this seems unworthy of God. It is considered as below a truly great man, to be much influenced in his conduct by a desire of popular applause. The notice and admiration of a gazing multitude, would be esteemed but a low end to be aimed at by a prince or philosopher, in any great and noble enterprize. How much more is it unworthy the great God, to perform his magnificent works, e. g. the creation of the vast universe, out of regard to the notice and admiration of worms of the dust, that the displays of his magnificence may be gazed at and applauded by those who are infinitely more beneath him, than the meanest rabble are beneath the greatest prince or philosopher.

This objection is specious. It hath a shew of argument: but it will appear to be nothing but a shew, if we consider,

1. Whether it be not worthy of God to regard and value what is excellent and valuable in itself, and so to take pleasure in its existence.

It seems not liable to any doubt, that there could be no future existence worthy to be desired or sought by God, and so worthy to be made his end, if no future existence was valuable and worthy to be brought to effect. If, when the world was not, there was any possible future thing fit and valuable in itself, I think the knowledge of God's glory, and the esteem and love of it, must be so. Understanding and will are the highest kind of created existence. And if they be valuable, it must be in their exercise. But the highest and most excellent kind of their exercise, is in some actual knowledge and exercise of will. And certainly, the most excellent actual knowledge and will that can be in the creature, is the knowledge and the love of God. And the most true excellent knowledge of God, is the knowledge of his glory or moral excellence; and the most excellent exercise of the will consists in esteem and love, and a delight in his glory. If any created existence is in itself worthy to be, or any thing that ever was future is worthy of existence, such a communication of divine fulness, such an emanation and expression of the divine glory is worthy of existence. But if nothing that ever was future was worthy to exist, then no future thing was worthy to be aimed at by God in creating the world. And if nothing was worthy to be aimed at in creation, then nothing was worthy to be God's end in creation.

If God's own excellency and glory is worthy to be highly valued and delighted in by him, then the value and esteem hereof by others, is worthy to be regarded by him: for this is a necessary consequence. To make this plain, let it be considered, how it is with regard to the excellent qualities of another. If we highly value the virtues and excellencies of a *friend*, in proportion we shall approve of others' esteem of them; and shall disapprove the contempt of them. If these virtues are truly valuable, they are worthy that we should thus approve others' esteem, and disapprove their contempt of them. And the case is the same with respect to any being's *own* qualities or attributes. If he highly esteems them, and greatly delights in them, he will naturally and necessarily love to see esteem of them in others, and dislike their disesteem.—And if the attributes are worthy to be highly esteemed by the being who hath them, so is the esteem of them in others worthy to be proportionably approved and regarded. I desire it may be considered, whether it be unfit that God should be displeased with contempt of himself? If not, but on the contrary it be fit and suitable that he should be displeased with this, there is the same reason that he should be pleased with the proper love, esteem and honour of himself.

The matter may be also cleared, by considering what it would become us to approve of and value with respect to any public society we belong to, e. g. our nation or country. It becomes us to love our country; and therefore it becomes us to value the just honour of our country. But the same that it becomes us to value and desire for a friend, and the same that it becomes us to desire and seek for the community, the same does it become God to value and seek for himself; that is, on supposition, that it becomes God to love himself as it does men to love a friend or the public; which I think has been before proved.

Here are two things that ought particularly to be adverted to. (1.) That in God, the love of himself and the love of the public, are not to be distinguished, as in man: because God's being, as it were, comprehends all. His existence, being infinite, must be equivalent to universal existence. And for the same reason that public affection in the creature is fit and beautiful, God's regard to himself must be so likewise.—(2.) In God, the love of what is fit and decent, cannot be a distinct thing from the love of himself; because the love of God is that wherein all holiness primarily and chiefly consists, and God's own holiness must primarily consist in the love of himself. And if God's holiness consists in love to himself, then it will imply an approbation of the esteem and love of him, in others. For a being that loves himself, necessarily loves love to himself. If holiness in God consist chiefly in love to him-

self, holiness in the creature must chiefly consist in love to him. And if God loves holiness in himself, he must love it in the creature.

Virtue, by such of the late philosophers as seem to be in chief repute, is placed in public affection, or general benevolence. And if the essence of virtue lies primarily in this, then the love of virtue itself is virtuous no otherwise, than as it is implied in or arises from, this public affection, or extensive benevolence of mind. Because if a man truly loves the public, he necessarily loves love to the public.

Now therefore, for the same reason, if universal benevolence in the highest sense, be the same thing with benevolence to the divine Being, who is in effect universal Being, it will follow, that love to virtue itself is no otherwise virtuous, than as it is implied in, or arises from, love to the divine Being. Consequently, God's own love to virtue is implied in love to himself: and is virtuous no otherwise than as it arises from love to himself. So that God's virtuous disposition, appearing in love to holiness in the creature, is to be resolved into the same thing with love to himself. And consequently, whereinsoever he makes *virtue* his end, he makes *himself* his end. In fine, God being as it were an all-comprehending Being, all his moral perfections—his holiness, justice, grace and benevolence—are some way or other to be resolved into a supreme and infinite regard to himself; and if so, it will be easy to suppose that it becomes him to make himself his supreme and last end in his works.

I would here observe, by the way, that if any insist that it becomes God to love and take delight in the virtue of his creatures for its *own* sake, in such a manner as not to love it from regard to *himself;* this will contradict a former objection against God taking pleasure in communications of himself; *viz.* that inasmuch as God is perfectly independent and self-sufficient, therefore all his happiness and pleasure consists in the enjoyment of himself. So that if the same persons make both objections, they must be inconsistent with themselves.

2. I would observe, that it is not unworthy of God to take pleasure in that which is in itself fit and amiable, even in those that are infinitely below him. If there be infinite grace and condescension in it, yet these are not unworthy of God; but infinitely to his honour and glory.

They who insist, that God's own glory was not an ultimate end of his creation of the world; but the happiness of his creatures; do it under a colour of exalting God's benevolence to his creatures. But if his love to them be so great, and he so highly values them as to look upon them worthy to be his *end* in all his great works, as they suppose; they are not consistent with themselves, in supposing that God has so little value for

their love and esteem. For as the nature of love, especially great love, causes him that loves to value the esteem of the person beloved; so, that God should take pleasure in the creature's just love and esteem, will follow from God's love both to himself and to his creatures. If he esteem and love himself, he must approve of esteem and love to himself; and disapprove the contrary. And if he loves and values the creature, he must value and take delight in their *mutual* love and esteem.

4. As to what is alledged, that it is unworthy of great men to be governed in their conduct and achievements by a regard to the applause of the populace; I would observe, What makes their applause worthy of so little regard, is their ignorance, giddiness, and injustice. The applause of the multitude very frequently is not founded on any just view of things, but on humour, mistake, folly, and unreasonable affections. Such applause deserves to be disregarded.—But it is not beneath a man of the greatest dignity and wisdom, to value the wise and just esteem of others, however inferior to him. The contrary, instead of being an expression of greatness of mind, would shew a haughty and mean spirit. It is *such* an esteem in his creatures, that God regards; for such an esteem only is fit and amiable in itself.

OBJECT. IV. To suppose that God makes himself his ultimate end in the creation of the world, derogates from the freeness of his goodness, in his beneficence to his creatures; and from their obligations to gratitude for the good communicated. For if God, in communicating his fulness, makes himself, and not the creatures, his end; then what good he does, he does for himself, and not for them; for his sake, and not theirs.

Answer. God and the creature, in the emanation of the divine fulness, are not properly set in opposition; or made the opposite parts of a disjunction. Nor ought God's glory and the creature's good, to be viewed as if they were properly and entirely distinct, in the objection. This supposeth, that God having respect to his glory, and the communication of good to his creatures, are things altogether different: that God communicating his fulness for *himself*, and his doing it for *them*, are things standing in a proper disjunction and opposition. Whereas, if we were capable of more perfect views of God and divine things, which are so much above us, it probably would appear very clear, that the matter is quite otherwise; and that these things, instead of appearing entirely distinct, are *implied* one in the other. God in seeking his glory, seeks the good of his creatures; because the emanation of his glory (which he seeks and delights in, as he delights in himself and his own eternal glory) implies the communicated excellency and happi-

ness of his creatures. And in communicating his fulness for them, he does it for himself; because their good, which he seeks, is so much in union and communion with himself. God is their good. Their excellency and happiness is nothing but the emanation and expression of God's glory: God, in seeking their glory and happiness, seeks himself: and in seeking himself, *i. e.* himself diffused and expressed, (which he delights in, as he delights in his own beauty and fulness) he seeks their glory and happiness.

This will the better appear, if we consider the degree and manner in which he aimed at the creature's excellency and happiness in creating the world; *viz.* during the whole of its designed eternal duration; in greater and greater nearness, and strictness of union with himself, in his own glory and happiness, in constant progression through all eternity. As the creature's good was viewed, when God made the world, with respect to its whole duration, and eternally progressive union to, and communion with him; so the creature must be viewed as in infinitely strict union with himself. In this view it appears, that God's respect to the *creature*, in the whole, *unites* with his respect to *himself*. Both regards are like two lines which at the beginning appear separate, but finally meet in one, both being directed to the same center. And as to the *good* of the creature itself, in its whole duration and infinite progression, it must be viewed as *infinite;* and as coming nearer and nearer to the same thing in its infinite fulness. The nearer any thing comes to infinite, the nearer it comes to an identity with God. And if any *good*, as viewed by God, is beheld as infinite, it cannot be viewed as a distinct thing from God's own infinite glory.

The apostle's discourse of the great love of Christ to men, (Eph. v. 25, &c.) leads us thus to think of the love of Christ to his church; as coinciding with his love to himself by virtue of the strict union of the church with him. "Husbands, love your wives, as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it—that he might present it to himself a glorious church. So ought men to love their wives, as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself—even as the Lord the church; for we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones." Now I apprehend, that there is nothing in God's disposition to communicate of his own fulness to the creatures, that at all derogates from the excellence of it, or the creature's obligation.

God's disposition to cause his own infinite fulness to flow forth, is not the less properly called his *goodness*, because the good he communicates is what he delights in, as he delights in his own glory. The creature has no less benefit by it; neither has such a disposition less of a direct tendency to the crea-

ture's benefit. Nor is this disposition in God, to diffuse his own good, the less excellent, because it is implied in his love to himself. For his love to himself does not imply it any otherwise, but as it implies a love to whatever is worthy and excellent. The emanation of God's glory is in itself worthy and excellent, and so God delights in it; and this delight is implied in his love to his own fulness; because that is the fountain, the sum and comprehension of every thing that is excellent. Nor does God's inclination to communicate good from regard to himself, or delight in his own glory, at all diminish the freeness of his beneficence. This will appear, if we consider particularly, in what ways doing good to others from self-love, may be inconsistent with the freeness of beneficence. And I conceive there are only these two ways,

1. When any does good to another from confined self-love, which is *opposite* to a general benevolence. This kind of self-love is properly called *selfishness*. In some sense, the most benevolent, generous person in the world, seeks his *own* happiness in doing good to others; because he places his happiness in their good. His mind is so enlarged as to take them, as it were, into himself. Thus when they are happy, he feels it; he partakes with them, and is happy in their happiness. This is so far from being inconsistent with the freeness of beneficence, that, on the contrary, free benevolence and kindness consists in it. The most free beneficence that can be in men, is doing good, not from a confined selfishness, but from a disposition to general benevolence, or love to being in general.

But now, with respect to the divine Being, there is no such thing as confined selfishness in him, or a love to himself *opposite* to general benevolence. It is impossible, because he comprehends all entity, and all excellence, in his own essence. The eternal and infinite Being, is in effect, *Being in general;* and comprehends universal existence. God, in his benevolence to his creatures, cannot have his heart enlarged, in such a manner as to take in beings who are originally out of himself, distinct and independent. This cannot be in an infinite being, who exists alone from eternity. But he from his goodness, as it were enlarges himself in a more excellent and divine manner. This is by communicating and diffusing himself; and *so*, instead of *finding*, he *makes* objects of his benevolence—not by taking what he finds distinct from himself, and so partaking of their good, and being happy in them, but—by flowing forth, and expressing himself in them, and making them to partake of him, and then rejoicing in himself expressed in them, and communicated to them.

2. Another thing, in doing good to others from self-love,

that derogates from the freeness of the goodness; is acting from *dependence* on them for the good we need or desire. So that, in our beneficence, we are not self-moved, but as it were constrained by something without ourselves. But it has been particularly shewn already, that God making himself his end, argues no dependence; but is consistent with absolute independence and self-sufficiency.

And I would here observe, that there is something in that disposition to communicate goodness, that shews God to be independent and self-moved in it, in a manner that is peculiar, and above the beneficence of creatures. Creatures, even the most excellent are not independent and self-moved in their goodness; but in all its exercises, they are excited by some object they find: something appearing good, or in some respect worthy of regard, presents itself, and moves their kindness. But God, being all, and alone, is absolutely self-moved. The exercises of his communicative disposition are absolutely from within himself; all that is good and worthy in the object, and its very *being*, proceeding from the overflowing of his fulness.

These things shew, that the supposition of God making himself his ultimate end, does not at all diminish the creature's obligation to gratitude for communications of good received. For if it lessen its obligation, it must be on one of the following accounts. Either that the creature has not so much benefit by it; or, that the disposition it flows from, is not proper goodness, not having so direct a tendency to the creature's benefit; or, that the disposition is not so virtuous and excellent in its kind; or, that the beneficence is not so free. But it has been observed, that none of these things take place, with regard to that disposition, which has been supposed to have excited God to create the world.

I confess there is a degree of indistinctness and obscurity in the close consideration of such subjects, and a great imperfection in the expressions we use concerning them; arising unavoidably from the infinite sublimity of the subject, and the incomprehensibleness of those things that are divine. Hence revelation is the surest guide in these matters; and what that teaches shall in the next place be considered. Nevertheless, the endeavours used to discover what the voice of reason is, so far as it can go, may serve to prepare the way, by obviating cavils insisted on by many; and to satisfy us, that what the word of God says of the matter is not unreasonable.

CHAP. II.

Wherein it is inquired, what is to be learned from Holy Scriptures, concerning God's last end in the Creation of the World.

SECT. I.

The Scriptures represent God as making himself his own last End in the creation of the World.

It is manifest, that the scriptures speak, on all occasions, as though God made *himself* his end in all his works; and as though the same being, who is the *first cause* of all things, were the supreme and *last end* of all things. Thus in Isa. xliv. 6. "Thus saith the Lord, the king of Israel, and his Redeemer the Lord of hosts, I am the first, I also am the last, and besides me there is no God." Chap. xlviii. 12. "I am the first and I am the last." Rev. i. 8. "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and was, and which is to come, the Almighty." Ver. 11. "I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last." Ver. 17. "I am the first and the last." Chap. xxi. 6. "And he said unto me, it is done; I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end." Chap. xxii. 13. "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last."

When God is so often spoken of as the *last* as well as the *first*, the *end* as well as the *beginning*, it is implied, that as he is the first, efficient cause and fountain, from whence all things originate; so, he is the last, final cause for which they are made: the final term to which they all tend in their ultimate issue. This seems to be the most natural import of these expressions; and is confirmed by other parallel passages; as Rom. xi. 36. "For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things." Col. i. 16. "For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers; all things were created by him, and for him." Heb. ii. 10. "For it became him, by whom are all things, and for whom are all things." And in Prov. xvi. 4. it is said expressly, "The Lord hath made all things for himself."

And the *manner* is observable, in which God is said to be the last, *to* whom, and *for* whom, are all things. It is evidently spoken of as a meet and suitable thing, a branch of his glory; a meet prerogative of the great, infinite, and eternal being; a thing becoming the dignity of him who is infinitely

above all other beings; from whom all things are, and by whom they consist; and in comparison with whom all other things are as nothing.

SECT. II.

Wherein some Positions are advanced concerning a just Method of arguing in this Affair, from what we find in the Holy Scriptures.

We have seen, that the scriptures speak of the creation of the world as being *for God* as its end. What remains therefore to be enquired into, is, *which way do the Scriptures represent God as making himself his end?* It is evident, that God does not make his *existence* or being the end of the creation; which cannot be supposed without great absurdity. His existence cannot be conceived of but as *prior* to any of God's designs. Therefore he cannot create the world to the end that he may have existence; or may have certain attributes and perfections. Nor do the scriptures give the least intimation of any such thing. Therefore, what divine effect, or what in relation to God is that which the scripture teacheth us to be the end he aimed at, in his works of creation, and in designing which he makes *himself* his end?

In order to a right understanding of the scripture doctrine, and drawing just inferences from what we find said in the word of God, relative to this matter; and so to open the way to a true and definite answer to the above enquiry, I would lay down the following positions.

Position 1. That which appears to be God's ultimate end in his works of *Providence* in general, we may justly suppose to be his last end in the work of *creation*. This appears from what was observed before, under the fifth particular of the introduction, which I need not now repeat.

Pos. 2. When any thing appears, by the scripture, to be the last end of *some* of the works of God, that thing appears to be the result of God's works in *general*. And although it be not mentioned as the end of those works, but only of *some* of them; yet as nothing appears *peculiar* in the nature of the case, that renders it a fit, beautiful, and valuable result of those particular works, more than of the rest; we may justly infer that thing to be the last end of those *other* works also. For we must suppose it to be on account of the value of the effect, that it is made the end of those works of which it is *expressly* spoken as the end; and this effect, by the supposition, being equally, and in like manner, the result of the work, and of the same value, it is but reasonable to suppose, that it is the end of

the work, of which it is naturally the consequence, in *one* case as well as in *another*.

Pos. 3. The ultimate end of God in creating the world being also the last end of all his works of *Providence*, we may well presume that if there be any *particular* thing more frequently mentioned in scripture, as God's ultimate aim in his works of Providence, than any thing else, this is the ultimate end of God's works in *general*, and so the end of the work of *creation*.

Pos. 4. That which appears from the word of God, to be his ultimate end with respect to the *moral* world, or the *intelligent* part of the system, that is God's last end in the work of creation in *general*. Because it is evident, from the constitution of the world itself, as well as from the word of God, that the moral part is the end of all the rest of the creation. The inanimate, unintelligent part, is made for the rational, as much as a house is prepared for the inhabitant. And it is evident also from reason and the word of God, that it is for the sake of some *moral good* in them, that moral agents are made, and the world made for them. But it is further evident, that whatsoever is the last end of *that part* of creation, which is the end of all the rest, and for which all the rest of the world was made, must be the last end of the *whole*. If all the other parts of a watch are made for the hand of the watch, in order to move that aright, then it will follow, that the last end of the *hand*, is the last end of the *whole* machine.

Pos. 5. That which appears from the scripture to be God's ultimate end in the *chief* works of his Providence, we may well determine is God's last end in creating the *world*. For, as observed, we may justly infer the *end* of a thing from the *use* of it. We may justly infer the end of a clock, a chariot, a ship, or water-engine, from the main *use* to which it is applied. But God's *Providence* is his *use* of the *world* he has made. And if there be any works of Providence which are evidently God's *main works*, herein appears and consists the *main use* that God makes of the creation.—From these two last positions we may infer the next, *viz.*

Pos. 6. Whatever appears, by the scriptures, to be God's ultimate end in his main works of *Providence* towards the *moral world*, that we may justly infer to be the last end of the *creation* of the world. Because, as was just now observed, the *moral* world is the *chief* part of the creation, and the end of the rest; and God's last end in creating *that part* of the world, must be his last end in the creation of the *whole*. And it appears, by the last position, that the end of God's main works of Providence towards moral beings, or the *main use* to which he puts them, shews the last end for which he has *made* them:

and consequently the main end for which he has made the *whole world.*

Pos. 7. That which divine revelation shews to be God's ultimate end with respect to *that part* of the moral world which are *good* in their *being*, and in their being *good*, this we must suppose to be the last end of God's *creating* the world. For it has been already shown, that God's last end in the *moral* part of creation must be the end of the *whole.* But his end in that part of the moral world that are *good*, must be the last end for which he has made the moral world in *general.* For therein consists the goodness of a thing, its fitness to answer its end; at least this must be goodness in the eyes of its author. For goodness in his eyes, is its agreeableness to his mind. But an agreeableness to his mind, in what he makes for some end or use, must be an agreeableness or fitness to that end. For his end in this case is his mind. That which he chiefly aims at in that thing, is chiefly his mind with respect to that thing. And therefore, they are good moral agents who are fitted for the end for which God has made moral agents. And consequently, that which is the chief end to which *good* created moral agents, in being good, are fitted, this is the *chief* end of the moral part of the creation; and consequently of the *creation in general.*

Pos. 8. That which the word of God requires the intelligent and moral part of the world to *seek*, as their ultimate and highest end, that we have reason to suppose is the last end for which God has *made them;* and consequently, by position fourth, the last end for which he has made the *whole world.* A main difference between the intelligent and moral parts, and the rest of the world, lies in this, that the former are capable of *knowing* their Creator, and the end for which he made them, and capable of *actively* complying with his design in their creation, and promoting it; while other creatures cannot promote the design of their creation, only *passively* and *eventually.* And seeing they are capable of knowing the end for which their author has made them, it is doubtless their duty to fall in with it. Their wills ought to comply with the will of the Creator in this respect, in *mainly seeking* the same, as *their* last end, which *God* mainly seeks as their last end. This must be the law of nature and reason with respect to them.—And we must suppose that God's revealed law, and the law of nature, agree; and that his will, as a *lawgiver*, must agree with his will as a Creator. Therefore we justly infer, that the same thing which God's *revealed* law requires intelligent creatures to seek, as their last and greatest end, that God their Creator had made their last end, and so the end of the creation of the world.

Pos. 9. We may well suppose, that what is in holy scripture, stated as the main end of the *goodness* of the moral world —so that the respect and relation their goodness has to that end, is what chiefly makes it valuable and desirable—is God's ultimate end in the *creation* of the moral world; and so, by position, the fourth of the *whole world.* For the end of the *goodness* of a thing, is the end of the *thing.*

Pos. 10. That which persons who are described in scripture as *approved* saints, and set forth as *examples* of piety, sought as their last and highest end, in the instances of their good and approved behaviour; that we must suppose, was what they *ought* to seek as their last end; and consequently by the preceding position was the same with *God's* last end in the *creation of the world.*

Pos. 11. What appears by the word of God to be that end, in the desires of which the souls of the best, and in their best frames, most naturally and directly *exercise* their goodness, and in expressing their desire of this end, they do most properly and directly express their respect to God; we may well suppose that end to be the *chief* and *ultimate* end of a spirit of piety and *goodness*, and God's chief end in making the *moral* world, and so the *whole world.* For, doubtless, the most direct tendency of a spirit of true goodness, in the best part of the moral world, is to the chief end of *goodness*, and so the chief end of the *creation* of the moral world. And in what else can the spirit of the true respect and friendship to God be expressed by way of desire, than in desires of the *same end* which God himself chiefly and ultimately desires in *making them and all other things.*

Pos. 12. Since the holy scriptures teach us that Jesus Christ is the Head of the moral world, and especially of all the good part of it; the chief of God's servants, appointed to be the Head of his saints and angels, and set forth as the chief and most perfect pattern and example of goodness; we may well suppose, by the foregoing positions, that what *he* sought as his last end, was God's last end in the *creation of the world.*

SECT. III.

Particular Texts of Scripture, that shew that God's Glory is an ultimate End of the Creation.

1. What God says in his word, naturally leads us to suppose, that the way in which he makes himself his end in his work or works, which he does *for his own sake*, is in making *his glory his end.*

Thus Isai. xlviii. 11. "For my own sake, even for my own sake, will I do it. For how should my name be polluted; and I will not give my glory to another." Which is as much as to say, I will obtain my end; I will not forego my glory; another shall not take this prize from me. It is pretty evident here, that God's *name* and his *glory*, which seem to intend the same thing, as shall be observed more particularly afterwards, are spoken of as his *last end* in the great work mentioned; not as an inferior, subordinate end, subservient to the interest of others. The words are emphatical. The emphasis and repetition constrain us to understand, that what God does is ultimately for his *own sake*. "For *my own sake*, even for *my own sake* will I do it."

So the words of the apostle, in Rom. xi. 36. naturally lead us to suppose, that the way in which all things are *to* God, is in being *for his glory*. "For of him, and through him, and to him are all things, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen." In the preceding context, the apostle observes the marvellous disposals of divine wisdom, for causing all things to be *to* him, in their final issue and result, as they are *from* him at first, and governed by him. His discourse shews how God contrived this and brought it to pass, by setting up the kingdom of Christ in the world; leaving the Jews, and calling the Gentiles; including what he would hereafter do in bringing in the Jews, with the fulness of the Gentiles; with the circumstances of these wonderful works, so as greatly to shew his justice and his goodness, to magnify his grace, and manifest the sovereignty and freeness of it, and the absolute dependence of all on him. And then, in the four last verses, he breaks out into a most pathetic exclamation, expressing his great admiration of the *depth* of divine wisdom, in the steps he takes for attaining his end, and causing all things to be *to* him: and finally, he expresses a joyful consent to God's excellent design in all to *glorify himself*, in saying, "to him be glory forever;" as much as to say, as all things are so wonderfully *ordered for his glory*, so let him *have the glory* of all, for evermore.

2. The glory of God is spoken of in holy scripture as the last end for which those parts of the moral world that are *good*, were made.

Thus in Isa. xliii. 6. 7. "I will say to the north give up, and to the south keep not back; bring my sons from afar, and my daughters from the ends of the earth, even every one that is called by my name; for I have created him *for my glory*, I have formed him, yea I have made him." Again, Isa. lx. 21. "Thy people also shall be all righteous. They shall inherit the land for ever, the branch of my planting, the work of my hand, *that I may be glorified*;" also chap. lxi. 3. "That they may be

called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, *that he might be glorified.*"

In these places we see that the *glory of God* is spoken of as the end of God's saints, the end for which he makes them *i. e.* either gives them being, or gives them a being as saints, or both. It is said, that God has made and formed them to be his sons and daughters, *for his own glory:* That they are trees of his planting, the work of his hands, as trees of righteousness, *that he might be glorified.* And if we consider the words, especially as taken with the context in each of the places, it will appear quite natural to suppose, that God's glory is here spoken of only as an end inferior and subordinate to the happiness of God's people. On the contrary, they will appear rather as promises of making God's people happy, that God therein might be glorified.

So is that in Isa. xliii. as we shall see plainly, if we take the whole that is said from the beginning of the chapter, ver. 1—7. It is wholly a promise of a future, great and wonderful work of God's power and grace, delivering his people from all misery, and making them exceeding happy; and then the end of all, or the sum of God's design in all, is declared to be *God's own glory.* "I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name, thou art mine—I will be with thee.—When thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burnt, neither shall the flame kindle upon thee.—Thou art precious and honourable in my sight. I will give men for thee, and people for thy life. Fear not, I am with thee.—I will bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth; every one that it called by my name: *for I have created him for my glory.*

So Isa. lx. ver. 21. The whole chapter is made up of nothing but promises of future, exceeding happiness to God's church; but, for brevity's sake, let us take only the two preceding verses, 19, 20. "The sun shall be no more thy light by day, neither for brightness shall the moon give light unto thee: but the Lord shall be unto thee an everlasting light, and thy God thy glory. Thy sun shall no more go down, neither shall thy moon withdraw itself; for the Lord shall be thine everlasting light, and the days of thy mourning shall be ended. Thy people also shall be all righteous; they shall inherit the land forever, the branch of my planting, the work of my hands;" and then the end of all is added, "*that I might be glorified.*" All the preceding promises are plainly mentioned as so many parts, or constituents, of the great and exceeding happiness of God's people; and *God's glory* is mentioned, as the sum of his design in this happiness.

In like manner is the promise in chap. lxi. 3. "To appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the

spirit of heaviness, that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, *that he might be glorified.* The work of God promised to be effected, is plainly an accomplishment of the joy, gladness, and happiness of God's people, instead of their mourning and sorrow; and the *end* in which God's design in this work is obtained and summed up, is *his glory.* This proves, by the seventh position, that *God's glory* is the *end of the creation.*

The same thing may be argued from Jer. xiii. 11. "For as a girdle cleaveth to the loins of a man, so have I caused to cleave unto me the whole house of Israel, and the whole house of Judah, saith the Lord: that they might be unto me for a people, and for a name, and for a praise, and *for a glory:* but they would not hear." That is, God sought to make them to be his own holy people; or, as the apostle expresses it, his peculiar people, zealous of good works; that so they might be a *glory* to him; as girdles were used in those days for ornament and beauty, and as badges of dignity and honour.*

Now when God speaks of himself, as seeking a peculiar and holy people for himself, to be for his glory and honour, as a man that seeks an ornament and badge of honour for his glory, it is not natural to understand it merely of a *subordinate* end, as though God had no respect to himself in it; but only the good of others. If so, the comparison would not be natural; for men are commonly wont to seek their *own glory* and honour in adorning themselves, and dignifying themselves with badges of honour.

The same doctrine seems to be taught, Eph. i. 5. "Having predestinated us to the adoption of children, by Jesus Christ, unto himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, *to the praise of the glory of his grace.*"—And the same may be argued from Isa. xliv. 23. "For the Lord hath redeemed Jacob, he hath *glorified himself* in Israel." And chap. xlix. 3. "Thou art my servant Jacob, in whom I *will be glorified.*" John xvii. 10. "And all mine are thine, and thine are mine, and I *am glorified* in them. 2 Thess. i. 10. "When he shall come to be *glorified* in his saints." Ver. 11, 12. "Wherefore also we pray always for you, that our God would count you worthy of his calling, and fulfil all the good pleasure of his goodness, and the work of faith with power: that the name of our Lord Jesus may be *glorified* in you, and ye in him, according to the grace of God and our Lord Jesus Christ."

3. The scripture speaks of God's glory, as his ultimate end of the *goodness* of the moral part of the creation; and that end, in relation to which chiefly the value of their virtue consists.

* See ver. 9. and also Isa. iii. 24, and xxii. 21. and xxiii. 10. 2 Sam. xviii. 11. Exod. xxviii. 8.

As in Phil. i. 10, 11. "That ye may approve things that are excellent, that ye may be sincere, and without offence till the day of Christ; being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, *unto the glory and praise of God.*" Here the apostle shews how the fruits of righteousness in them are valuable, and how they answer their end, viz. in being "by Jesus Christ *to the praise and glory of God.*" John xv. 8. "Herein is my Father *glorified*, that ye bear much fruit." Signifying, that by this means it is that the great *end* of religion is to be answered. And in 1 Pet. iv. 11. the apostle directs the christians to regulate all their religious performances, with reference to that one end. "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God: if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth, *that God in all things may be glorified;* to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever, Amen."

And, from time to time, embracing and practising true religion, and repenting of sin, and turning to holiness, is expressed by *glorifying God* as though that were the sum and end of the whole matter. Rev. xi. 13. "And in the earthquake were slain of men seven thousand: and the remnant were affrighted, and *gave glory to the God of Heaven.*" So Rev. xiv. 6, 7. "And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach to them that dwell on the earth; saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and *give glory to him.*" As though this were the sum and *end* of that virtue and religion, which was the grand design of preaching the gospel, every where through the world. Rev. xvi. 9. "And repented not to *give him glory.*" Which is as much as to say, they did not forsake their sins and turn to true religion, that God might receive that which is the great end he seeks, in the religion he requires of men. (See to the same purpose, Psal. xxii. 21—23. Isa, lxvi. 19. xxiv. 15. xxv. 3. Jer. xiii. 15, 16. Dan. v. 23. Rom. xv. 5, 6.)

And as the *exercise* of true religion and virtue in christians is summarily expressed by their *glorifying God*, so, when the good influence of this on others is spoken of, it is expressed in the same manner. Matth. v. 16. "Let your light so shine before men, that others seeing your good works, may *glorify your father* which is in heaven." 1 Pet. ii. 12. "Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles, that whereas they speak evil against you as evil-doers, they may, by your good works which they behold, glorify God in the day of visitation."

That the ultimate end of moral goodness, or righteousness, is answered in God's glory being attained, is *supposed* in the *objection* which the apostle makes, or supposes some will make, Rom. iii. 7. "For if the truth of God hath more abounded through my life unto *his glory*, why am I judged as a sinner?"

i. e. seeing the great end of righteousness is answered by my sin, in God being glorified, why is my sin condemned and punished: and why is not my vice equivalent to virtue?

And the glory of God is spoken of as that wherein consists the value and end of particular graces. As of *faith*, Rom. iv. 20. "He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief: but was strong in faith, *giving glory to God.*" Phil. ii. 11. "That every tongue should confess that Jesus is the Lord, *to the glory of God the father.*" Of *repentance.* Josh. vi. 19. "Give, I pray thee, *glory to the Lord God of Israel*, and make confession unto him." Of *charity.* 2 Cor. viii. 19. "With this grace, which is administered by us, *to the glory of the same Lord*, and declaration of your ready mind. Thanksgiving and *praise.*" Luke vii. 18. "There are not found that returned to *give glory to God*, save this stranger." Psal. l. 23. "Whoso offereth praise *glorifieth me;* and to him that ordereth his conversation aright, will I shew the salvation of God." Concerning which last place may be observed, that God seems to say this to such as supposed, in their religious performances, that the *end of all religion was to glorify God.* They supposed they did this in the best manner, in offering a multitude of sacrifices; but God corrects their mistake, and informs them, that this grand end of religion is not attained this way, but in offering the more spiritual sacrifices of praise and a holy conversation.

In fine, the words of the apostle in 1 Cor. vi. 20. are worthy of particular notice. "Ye are not your own; for ye are bought with a price: therefore *glorify God* in your body and in your spirit, which are his." Here, not only is glorifying God spoken of, as what summarily comprehends the end of religion, and of Christ redeeming us; but the apostle urges, that inasmuch as we are not our own, we ought not to act as if we were our own, but as God's; and should not use the members of our bodies, or faculties of our souls, for ourselves, but for God, as making him our end. And he expresses the way in which we are to make God our end, viz. in making his *glory* our end. "Therefore *glorify* God in your body and in your spirit, which are his." Here it cannot be pretended, that though christians are indeed required to make God's glory their end; yet it is but as a *subordinate* end, as subservient to their own happiness; for then, in acting chiefly and ultimately for their own-selves, they would use themselves more as their *own* than as God's; which is directly contrary to the design of the apostle's exhortation, and the argument he is upon; which is, that we should give ourselves as it were away *from ourselves to God*, and use ourselves as *his*, and not our *own*, acting for *his sake*, and not our *own sakes.* Thus it is evident, by position the ninth.

that the *glory of God is the last end for which he created the world.*

4. There are some things in the word of God which lead us to suppose, that it *requires* of men that they should *desire* and *seek* God's glory, as their highest and last end in what they do.

As particularly, from 1 Cor. x. 30. "Whether therefore ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all *to the glory of God.*" And 1 Pet. iv. 11.—"That God in all things *may be glorified.*" And this may be argued, that Christ requires his followers should desire and seek God's glory in the *first place*, and *above all* things else, from that prayer which he gave his disciples, as the pattern and rule for the direction of his followers in their prayers. The first petition of which is, *Hallowed be thy name.* Which in scripture language is the same with *glorified* be thy name: as is manifest from Lev. x. 3. Ezek. xxviii. 22. and many other places. Now our last and highest end is doubtless what should be first in our *desires*, and consequently first in our *prayers;* and therefore, we may argue, that since Christ directs that God's glory should be first in our prayers, that therefore this is our last end. This is further confirmed by the conclusion of the Lord's prayer, *For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory.* Which, as it stands in connection with the rest of the prayer, implies, that we desire and ask all the things mentioned in each petition, with a subordination, and in subservience to the dominion and glory of God; in which all our desires ultimately terminate as their last end. God's glory and dominion are the two first things mentioned in the prayer, and are the subject of the first half of the prayer; and they are the two last things mentioned in the same prayer, in its conclusion. God's glory is the Alpha and Omega in the prayer. From these things we may argue, according to position the eighth, that *God's glory is the last end of the creation.*

5. The glory of God appears, by the account given in scripture, to be that event, in the earnest desires of which, and in their delight in which, the *best part* of the moral world, and when in their *best frames*, most naturally express the direct tendency of the spirit of true goodness, the virtuous and pious affections of their heart.

This is the way in which the holy *apostles*, from time to time, gave vent to the ardent exercises of their piety, and breathed forth their regard to the supreme Being. Rom. xi. 36. "To whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen." Chap. xvi. 27. "To God only wise, be glory, through Jesus Christ, for ever. Amen." Gal. i. 4, 5. "Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father, to whom be glory for ever

and ever, Amen." 2 Tim. iv. 18. "And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me to his heavenly kingdom: to whom be glory for ever and ever, Amen." Eph. iii. 21. "Unto him be glory in the Church by Christ Jesus, throughout all ages, world without end." Heb. xiii. 21.—— "Through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever, Amen." Phil. iv. 20. "Now unto God and our Father, be glory for ever and ever, Amen." 2 Pet. iii. 18. "To him be glory, both now and for ever, Amen." Jude 25. "To the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever, Amen." Rev. i. 5, 6. "Unto him that loved us, &c.—to him be glory and dominion, for ever and ever, Amen."

It was in this way that holy David, the sweet psalmist of Israel, vented the ardent tendencies and desires of his pious heart. 1 Chron. xvi. 28, 29. "Give unto the Lord, ye kindreds of the people, give unto the Lord glory and strength: give unto the Lord the glory due unto his name." We have much the same expressions again, Psal. xxix. 1, 2. and lxix. 7, 8. See also, Psal. lvii. 5. lxxii. 18, 19. cxv. 1. So the whole church of God through all parts of the earth. Isa. xlii. 10—12. In like manner the *saints and angels in heaven express* the piety of their hearts. Rev. iv. 9, 11—14. and vii. 12. This is the event that the hearts of the seraphim especially exult in, as appears by Isa. vi. 2, 3. "Above it stood the seraphim.—And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts, the whole earth is full of his glory." So at the birth of Christ, Luke ii. 14. "Glory to God in the highest, &c."

It is manifest that these holy persons in earth and heaven, in thus expressing their desires of the glory of God, have respect to it, not merely as a subordinate end, but as that which is in *itself* valuable in the *highest degree*. It would be absurd to say, that in these ardent exclamations they are only giving vent to their vehement *benevolence to their fellow-creatures*, and expressing their earnest desire that *God might be glorified*, that so his *subjects* may be made happy by *that means*. It is evident, it is not so much their love, either to themselves, or their fellow-creatures, which they express, as their exalted and supreme regard to the most high and infinitely glorious Being. When the church says, "Not unto us, not unto us, O Jehovah, but to thy name give glory," it would be absurd to say, that she only desires that God may have glory, as a necessary or *convenient means* of their own advancement and felicity. From these things it appears, by the eleventh position, that *God's glory is the end of the creation.*

6. The scripture leads us to suppose that *Christ* sought God's glory, as his highest and last end.

John vii. 18. "He that speaketh of himself seeketh his own glory: but he that seeketh *his* glory that sent him, the same is true, and no unrighteousness is in him." When Christ says, he did not seek his own glory, we cannot reasonably understand him, that he had no regard to his own glory, even the glory of the human nature; for the glory of that nature was part of the reward promised him, and of the joy set before him. But we must understand him, that this was not his *ultimate* aim; it was not the end that *chiefly* governed his conduct: and therefore, when in opposition to this, in the latter part of the sentence, he says, "But he that seeketh his glory that sent him, the same is true, &c." It is natural from the antithesis to understand him, that this was his ultimate aim, his supreme governing end.

John xii. 27, 28. "Now is my soul troubled, and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour: But for this cause came I unto this hour, Father, *glorify thy name*." Christ was now going to Jerusalem, and expected in a few days there to be crucified: and the prospect of his last sufferings, in this near approach, was very terrible to him. Under this distress of mind he supports himself with a prospect of what would be the consequence of his sufferings, *viz. God's glory*. Now it is the *end* that supports the agent in any difficult work that he undertakes, and above all others, his *ultimate* and supreme end; for this is above all others valuable in his eyes; and so sufficient to countervail the difficulty of the means. That end which is in itself agreeable and sweet to him, and which ultimately terminates his desires, is the center of rest and support; and so must be the fountain and sum of all the delight and comfort he has in his prospects, with respect to his work. Now Christ has his soul straightened and distressed with a view of that which was infinitely the most difficult part of his work, and which was just at hand. Now certainly, if his mind seeks support in the conflict from a view of his end, it must most naturally repair to the *highest* end, which is the proper fountain of all support in this case. We may well suppose, that when his soul conflicts with the most extreme difficulties, it would resort to the idea of his supreme and ultimate end, the fountain of all the support and comfort he has in the work.

The same thing, Christ seeking the glory of God as his ultimate end, is manifest by what he says when he comes yet nearer to the hour of his last sufferings, in that remarkable prayer, the last he ever made with his disciples, on the evening before his crucifixion; wherein he expresses the sum of his aims and desires. His first words are, "Father, the hour is come, glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee." As this is his first request, we may suppose it to be his supreme re-

quest and desire, and what he ultimately aimed at in all. If we consider what follows to the end, all the rest that is said in the prayer seems to be but an amplification of this great request.—On the whole I think it is pretty manifest, that Jesus Christ sought the *glory of God* as his highest and last end; and that therefore, by position twelfth, this was *God's last end in the creation of the world.*

7. It is manifest from scripture, that God's glory is the last end of that great work of providence, the work of *redemption* by Jesus Christ.

This is manifest from what is just now observed, of its being the end ultimately sought by Jesus Christ the Redeemer. And if we further consider the texts mentioned in the proof of that, and take notice of the context, it will be very evident that it was what Christ sought as his last end, in that great work which he came into the world upon, *viz.* to procure redemption for his people. It is manifest, that Christ professes in John vii. 18. that he did not seek his own glory in what he did, but the glory of him that sent him. He means in the work of his ministry; the work he performed, and which he came into the world to perform, which is the work of redemption. And with respect to that text, John xii. 27, 28; it has been already observed, that Christ comforted himself in the view of the extreme difficulty of his work, in the prospect of the highest, ultimate, and most excellent end of that work, which he set his heart most upon, and delighted most in.

And in the answer that the Father made him from heaven at that time, in the latter part of the same verse, John xii. 28. "I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again." The meaning plainly is, that God had glorified his name in what Christ had done, in the work he sent him upon; and would glorify it again, and to a greater degree, in what he should further do, and in the success thereof. Christ shews that he understood it thus, in what he says upon it, when the people took notice of it, wondering at the voice; some saying that it thundered, others, that an angel spake to him. Christ says, "This voice came not because of me, but for your sakes." And then he says, (exulting in the prospect of this glorious end and success,) "Now is the judgment of this world; now is the prince of this world cast out; and I, if I be lift up from the earth, will draw all men unto me." In the success of the same work of redemption he places his own glory, as was observed before. John xii. 23, 24. "The hour is come, that the Son of man should be glorified. Verily, verily, I say unto you, except a corn of wheat fall into the ground, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit."

So it is manifest, that when he seeks his own and his Father's glory, in that prayer, John xvii. he seeks it as the end of

that great work he came into the world upon, and which he is about to finish in his death. What follows through the whole prayer, plainly shews this; particularly the 4th and 5th verses. "I have glorified thee on earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self." Here it is pretty plain, that declaring to his Father he had glorified him on earth, and finished the work given him to do, meant that he had finished the work which God gave him to do *for this end*, that he might be *glorified*. He had now finished that foundation that he came into the world to lay for his glory. He had laid a foundation for his Father's obtaining his will, and the utmost that he designed. By which it is manifest, that God's glory was the utmost of his design, or his *ultimate end* in this great work.

And it is manifest, by John xiii. 31, 32. that the glory of the Father, and his own glory, are what Christ exulted in, in the prospect of his approaching sufferings, when Judas was gone out to betray him, as the end his heart was mainly set upon, and supremely delighted in. "Therefore when he was gone out Jesus said, Now is the Son of man glorified, and God is glorified in him. If God be glorified in him, God shall also glorify him in himself, and shall straightway glorify him."

That the glory of God is the highest and last end of the work of redemption, is confirmed by the song of the angels at Christ's birth. Luke ii. 14. "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, and good will towards men." It must be supposed that they knew what was God's last end in sending Christ into the world: and that in their rejoicing on the occasion, their minds would most rejoice in that which was most valuable and glorious in it; which must consist in its relation to that which was its chief and ultimate end. And we may further suppose that the thing which chiefly engaged their minds was most glorious and joyful in the affair; and would be first in that song which was to express the sentiments of their minds, and exultation of their hearts.

The glory of the Father and the Son is spoken of as the end of the work of redemption, in Phil. ii. 6—11, (very much in the same manner as in John xii. 23, 28, and xiii. 31, 32, and xvii. 1, 4, 5.) "Who being in the form of God,—made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross: wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name, &c. that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow,—and every tongue confess that Jesus is the Lord, TO THE GLORY OF GOD THE FATHER." So God's glory, or the praise of his glory, is spoken of as the end of the work of redemption. in Eph. i. 3, &c. "Blessed

be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ according as he hath chosen us in him. Having predestinated us to the adoption of children, TO THE PRAISE OF THE GLORY OF HIS GRACE." And in the continuance of the same discourse concerning the redemption of Christ, God's glory is once and again mentioned as the great end of all.

Several things belonging to that great redemption are mentioned in the following verses: Such as God's great wisdom in it, ver. 8. The clearness of light granted through Christ, ver. 9. God's gathering together in one, all things in heaven and earth in Christ, ver. 10. God's giving the Christians that were first converted to the Christian faith from among the Jews, an interest in this great redemption, ver. 11. Then the great end is added, ver. 12. "That we should be TO THE PRAISE OF HIS GLORY, who first trusted in Christ." And then is mentioned the bestowing of the same great salvation on the Gentiles, in its beginning or first fruits in the world, and in completing it in another world, in the two next verses. And then the same great end is added again. "In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: In whom also, after that ye believed, ye were sealed with the holy spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance, until the redemption of the purchased possession, UNTO THE PRAISE OF HIS GLORY." The same thing is expressed much in the same manner, in 2 Cor. iv. 14, 15.—"He which raised up the Lord Jesus, shall raise us up also by Jesus, and shall present us with you. For all things are for your sakes, that the abundance of grace might, through the thanksgiving of many, redound TO THE GLORY OF GOD."

The same is spoken of as the end of the work of redemption in the Old Testament, Psal. lxxix. 9. "Help us, O God of our salvation, FOR THE GLORY OF THY NAME; deliver us and purge away our sins, for thy name's sake." So in the prophecies of the redemption of Jesus Christ. Isa. xliv. 23. "Sing, O ye heavens; for the LORD hath done it: shout, ye lower parts of the earth: break forth into singing, ye mountains: O forest, and every tree therein: for the LORD hath redeemed Jacob, and GLORIFIED HIMSELF in Israel!" Thus the works of creation are called upon to rejoice at the attaining of the same end, by the redemption of God's people, that the angels rejoiced at when Christ was born. See also Isa. xlviii. 10, 11, and xlix. 3.

Thus it is evident, that the glory of God is the ultimate end of the work of redemption; which is the chief work of Providence towards the moral world, as is abundantly manifest from scripture. For the whole universe is put in subjection to Jesus Christ; all heaven and earth, angels and men,

are subject to him, as executing this office: and are put under him to that end, that all things may be ordered by him, in subservience to the great designs of his redemption. All power, as he says, is given to him, in heaven and in earth, that he may give eternal life as to as many as the Father has given him; and he is exalted far above all principality and power, and might and dominion, and made head over all things to the church. The angels are put in subjection to him, that he may employ them all as ministering spirits, for the good of them that shall be the heirs of salvation: and all things are so governed by their Redeemer, that all things are theirs, whether things present or things to come: and all God's works of providence in the moral government of the world, which we have an account of in scripture history, or that are foretold in scripture prophecy, are evidently subordinate to the great purposes and ends of this great work. And besides, the work of redemption is that by which good men are, as it were, brought into being, as good men, or as restored to holiness and happiness. The work of redemption is a new creation, according to scripture, whereby men are brought into a new existence, or are made new creatures.

From these things it follows, according to the 5th, 6th, and 7th positions, that *the glory of God is the last end of the creation of the world.*

8. The scripture leads us to suppose, that God's glory is his last end in his *moral government* of the world in general. This has been already shewn concerning several things that belong to God's moral government of the world. As particularly in the work of redemption, the chief of all his dispensations in his moral government of the world. And I have also observed it, with respect to the duty which God requires of the subjects of his moral government, in requiring them to seek his glory as their last end. And this is actually the last end of the moral goodness required of them, the end which gives their moral goodness its chief value. And also, that it is what that person which God has set at the head of the moral world, as its chief governor, even Jesus Christ, seeks as *his* chief end. And it has been shewn, that it is the chief end for which that part of the moral world which are good are made, or have their existence as good.

I now further observe, that this is the end of the establishment of the public *worship* and *ordinances* of God among mankind. Hag. i. 8. "Go up to the mountain, and bring wood, and build the house; and I will take pleasure in it, and I will BE GLORIFIED, saith the Lord." This is spoken of as the end of God's promises of rewards, and of their fulfilment. 2 Cor. i. 20. "For all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him Amen, TO THE GLORY OF GOD by us." And this is spoken of as

the end of the execution of God's threatenings, in the punishment of sin. Numb. xiv. 20, 21, 22, 23. "And the Lord said, I have pardoned according to thy word. But, as truly as I live, all the earth shall be filled with THE GLORY OF JEHOVAH." The glory of Jehovah is evidently here spoken of, as that to which he had regard as his highest and ultimate end, which therefore he could not fail of; but must take place every where, and in every case, through all parts of his dominion, whatever became of men. And whatever abatements might be made, as to judgments deserved; and whatever changes might be made in the course of God's proceedings from compassion to sinners; yet the attaining of God's glory was an end, which being ultimate and supreme, must in no case whatsoever give place. This is spoken of as the end of God executing judgments on his enemies in this world. Exod. xiv. 17, 18. "And I will get me honour (ואכבדה *I will be glorified*) upon Pharaoh, and upon all his host," &c. Ezek. xxviii. 22. "Thus saith the Lord God, Behold I am against thee, O Zidon, and I WILL BE GLORIFIED in the midst of thee: And they shall know that I am the Lord, when I shall have executed judgments in her, and shall be *sanctified* in her." So Ezek. xxxix. 13. "Yea, all the people of the land shall bury them; and it shall be to them a renown, the day *that I shall be glorified*, saith the Lord God." And this is spoken of as the end both of the executions of wrath, and in the glorious exercises of mercy, in the misery and happiness of another world. Rom. ix. 22, 23. "What if God willing to shew his wrath, and make his power known, endured with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: and that he might make known the *riches of his glory* on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory." And this is spoken of as the end of the day of judgment, which is the time appointed for the highest exercises of God's authority as moral governor of the world; and is as it were the day of the consummation of God's moral government, with respect to all his subjects in heaven, earth and hell. 2 Thess. i. 9, 10. "Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from *the glory of his power;* when he shall come *to be glorified* in his saints, and *to be admired* in all them that believe." Then his glory shall be obtained, with respect both to saints and sinners.—From these things it is manifest, by the fourth position, that God's glory is the ultimate end of the creation of the world.

9. It appears from what has been already observed, that the glory of God is spoken of in scripture as the last end of many of his works: and it is plain that this is in fact the result of the works of God's common providence, and of the creation of the world. Let us take God's glory in what sense soever, consistent

with its being a good attained by any work of God, certainly it is the consequence of these works: and besides, it is expressly so spoken of in scripture.

This is implied in the eighth psalm, wherein are celebrated the works of creation: the heavens, the work of God's fingers; the moon and the stars, ordained by him; and man, made a little lower than the angels, &c. The first verse is—"O Lord, our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth! who hast set thy *glory* above the heavens," or upon the heavens. By *name* and *glory*, very much the same thing is intended here as in many other places, as shall be particularly shewn afterwards. The psalm concludes as it began. "O Lord, our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth!" So in the 148th psalm, after a particular mention of most of the works of creation, enumerating them in order, the psalmist says, ver. 13. "Let them praise the name of the Lord, for his name alone is excellent, *his glory* is above the earth and the heaven." And in the 104th psalm, after a very particular, orderly, and magnificent representation of God's works of creation and common providence, it is said in the 31st verse, "The *glory of the Lord* shall endure for ever: the Lord shall rejoice in his works." Here God's glory is spoken of as the grand result and blessed consequence, on account of which he rejoices in these works. And this is one thing doubtless implied in the song of the seraphim, Isa. vi. 3. "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts, the whole earth is full of his glory."

The glory of God, in being the result and consequence of those works of providence that have been mentioned, is in fact the consequence of the creation. The good attained in the use of a thing made for use, is the result of the making of that thing; as signifying the time of day, when actually attained by the use of a watch, is the consequence of making the watch. So it is apparent, that the glory of God is actually the result and consequence of the creation of the world. And from what has been already observed it appears, that it is what God seeks as good, valuable, and excellent in itself. And I presume none will pretend, that there is any thing peculiar in the nature of the case, rendering it a thing valuable in some of the instances wherein it takes place, and not in others: or that the glory of God, though indeed an effect of all God's works, is an exceeding desirable effect of some of them; but of others, a worthless and insignificant effect. God's glory therefore must be a desirable, valuable consequence of the work of creation. Therefore it is manifest, by position the third, that the glory of God is an ultimate end in the creation of the world.

SECT. IV.

Places of scripture that lead us to suppose that God created the world for his name, to make his perfections known; and that he made it for his praise.

1. Here I shall first take notice of some passages of scripture that speak of God's *name* as being the object of his regard, and the regard of his virtuous and holy intelligent creatures, much in the same manner as has been observed of *God's glory.*

God's *name* is in like manner spoken of, as the *end* of his acts of goodness towards the good part of the moral world, and of his works of mercy and salvation towards his people.—As 1 Sam. xii. 22. "The Lord will not forsake his people, *for his great name's sake.*" Psal. xxiii. 3. "He restoreth my soul, he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness, *for his name's sake.*" Psal. xxxi. 3. "*For thy name's sake*, lead me, and guide me." Psal. cix. 21. "But do thou for me,——*for thy name's sake.*" The forgiveness of sin in particular, is often spoken of as being for God's *name's sake.*" 1 John ii. 12. "I write unto you, little children, because your sins are forgiven you *for his name's sake.*" Psal. xxv. 11. "*For thy name's sake*, O Lord, pardon mine iniquity, for it is great." Psal. lxxix. 9. "Help us, O God of our salvation, *for the glory of thy name;* and deliver us, and purge away our sins, *for thy name's sake.*" Jer. xiv. 7. "O Lord, though our iniquities testify against us, do thou it *for thy name's sake.*"

These things seem to shew, that the *salvation of Christ* is for God's *name's sake.* Leading and guiding in the way of safety and happiness, restoring the soul, the forgiveness of sin; and that help, deliverance and salvation, that is consequent therein, is *for God's name.* And here it is observable, that those two great temporal salvations of God's people, the redemption from Egypt, and that from Babylon, often represented as figures and similitudes of the redemption of Christ, are frequently spoken of as being wrought *for God's name's sake.*

Thus that great work of God, in delivering his people from Egypt, and conducting them to Canaan. 2 Sam. vii. 23. "And what one nation in the earth is like thy people, even like Israel, whom God went to redeem for a people to himself, and to *make him a name.*" Psal. cvi. 8. "Nevertheless he saved them *for his name's sake.*" Isa. lxiii. 12. "That led them by the right hand of Moses with his glorious arm dividing the waters before them, *to make himself an everlasting*

name." In the 20th chap. of Ezekiel, God, rehearsing the various parts of this wonderful work, adds from time to time, "*I wrought for my name's sake*, that it should not be polluted before the heathen," as in ver. 9, 14, 22. (See also Josh. vii. 8, 9. Dan. ix. 15.)

So is the redemption from the *Babylonish* captivity. Isa. xlviii. 9, 10. "*For my name's sake* will I defer mine anger. For mine own sake, even for mine own sake, will I do it; for how should *my name* be polluted?' In Ezek. xxxvi. 21, 22, 23. the reason is given for God's mercy in restoring Israel. "But I had pity for my holy name. Thus saith the Lord, I do not this for your sakes, O house of Israel, but *for my holy name's sake*;—And I will *sanctify my great name*, which was profaned among the heathen." And chap. xxxix. 25. "Therefore thus saith the Lord God, now will I bring again the captivity of Jacob, and have mercy upon the whole house of Israel, *and will be jealous for my holy name*." Daniel prays, that God would forgive his people, and shew them mercy *for his own sake*. Dan. ix. 19.

When God, from time to time, speaks of shewing *mercy*, and exercising goodness, and promoting his people's happiness for his *name's sake*, we cannot understand it as of a merely subordinate end. How absurd would it be to say, that he promotes their happiness for his name's sake, in subordination to their good; and that his name may be exalted only for their sakes, as a means of promoting their happiness! especially when such expressions as these are used, "For mine own sake, even for mine own sake will I do it; for how should my name be polluted?" and "Not for your sakes do I this, but for my holy name's sake."

Again, it is represented as though God's people had their existence, at least as God's people, for God's name's sake. God's redeeming or purchasing them, that they might be his people, *for his name*, implies this. As in that passage mentioned before, 2 Sam. vii. 23. "Thy people Israel, whom God went to redeem for a people to himself, and *to make him a name*." So God making them a people for his name, is implied in Jer. xiii. 11. "For as the girdle cleaveth to the loins of a man, so have I caused to cleave unto me the whole house of Israel, &c.—that they may be unto me for a people, *and for a name*." Acts xv. 14. "Simeon hath declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people *for his name*."

This also is spoken of as the end of the *virtue*, religion, and holy behaviour of the saints. Rom. i. 5. "By whom we have received grace and apostleship, for obedience to the faith among all nations *for his name*." Matt. xix. 29. "Every one that forsaketh houses, or brethren, &c.—*for my name's sake*,

shall receive an hundred fold, and shall inherit everlasting life." 3 John 7. "Because that *for his name's sake* they went forth, taking nothing of the Gentiles." Rev. ii. 3. "And hast borne, and hast patience, and *for my name's sake* hast laboured and hast not fainted."

And we find that holy persons express their *desire* of this, and their *joy* in it, in the same manner as in the glory of God. 2 Sam. vii. 26. "Let thy *name* be magnified for ever." Psal. lxxvi. 1. "In Judah is God known, his name is great in Israel." Psal. cxlviii. 13. "Let them praise the *name* of the Lord; for his *name* alone is excellent, his *glory* is above the earth and heaven." Psal. cxxxv. 13. "Thy *name*, O Lord, endureth for ever, and thy memorial throughout all generations." Isa. xii. 4. "Declare his doings among the people, make mention that his *name* is exalted."

The *judgments* God executes on the wicked, are spoken of as being *for the sake of his name*, in like manner as for his glory. Exod. ix. 16. "And in very deed, for this cause have I raised thee up, for to shew in thee my power: and that my *name* may be declared throughout all the earth." Neh. ix. 10. "And shewedst signs and wonders upon Pharaoh, and on all his servants, and on all the people of his land; for thou knewedst that they dealt proudly against them: so didst thou *get thee a name*, as at this day."

And this is spoken of as a *consequence* of the works of creation, in like manner as God's *glory*. Psal. viii. 1. "O Lord, *how excellent is thy name*, in all the earth! who hast set thy glory above the heavens." And then, at the conclusion of the observations on the works of creation, the psalm ends thus, ver. 9. "O Lord, our Lord, *how excellent is thy name*, in all the earth!" So Psal. cxlviii. 13. after a particular mention of the various works of creation, "Let them praise the name of the Lord, for *his name alone* is excellent in all the earth, his glory is above the earth and the heaven.

2. So we find the manifestation of God's *perfections*, his *greatness*, and *excellency*, is spoken of very much in the same manner as God's glory.

There are several scriptures which would lead us to suppose this to be the great thing that God sought of the *moral world*, and the end aimed at in moral agents, wherein they are to be active in answering their end. This seems implied in that argument God's people sometimes made use of, in deprecating a state of death and destruction: that in such a state, they cannot know or make known the glorious excellency of God. Psal. lxxxviii. 18, 19. "Shall thy loving-kindness be declared in the grave, or thy faithfulness in destruction? Shall thy wonders be known in the dark, and thy righteousness in the land of forgetfulness?" So Psal. xxx. 9. Isa. xxxviii. 18, 19.

The argument seems to be this: Why should we perish? and how shall thine end, for which thou hast made us, be obtained in a state of destruction, in which thy glory cannot be known or declared?

This is the end of the *good part* of the moral world, or the end of God's people in the same manner as the glory of God. Isa. xliii. 21. "This people have I formed for myself, they shall shew forth my *praise*." 1 Pet. ii. 9. "But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people, *that ye should shew forth the praises of him* who hath called you out of darkness into marvellous light."

And this seems to be represented as the thing wherein the *value*, the proper *fruit* and end of their virtue appears. Isa. lx. 6. Speaking of the conversion of the Gentile nations to true religion. "They shall come and *shew forth the praises* of the Lord." Isa. lxvi. 19. "I will send—unto the nations—and to the isles afar off, that have not *heard my fame*, neither have seen my glory; and they shall *declare* my *glory* among the Gentiles.—To which we may add, the *proper tendency* and rest of true virtue, and holy dispositions. 1 Chron. xvii. 8. "Make known his deeds among the people." Verse 23, 24. "Shew forth from day to day thy salvation. Declare his glory among the Heathen."*

This seems to be spoken of as a great end of the acts of God's *moral government;* particularly, the great *judgments* he executes for sin. Exod. ix. 16. "And in very deed, for this cause have I raised thee up, to shew in thee my power; and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth." Dan. iv. 17. "This matter is by the decree of the watchers, &c. To the intent that the living may know that the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will; and setteth up over it the basest of men." But places to this purpose are too numerous to be particularly recited. See them in the margin.†

This is also a great end of God's works of *favour* and *mercy* to his people. 2 Kings xix. 19. "Now therefore, O Lord our God, I beseech thee, save thou us out of his hand, that all the kingdoms of the earth *may know that thou art the Lord God*, even thou only." 1 Kings viii. 59, 60.—"That he maintain the cause of his servant, and the cause of his people

* See also, Psal. ix. 1, 11, 14, and xix 1. and xxvi. 7. and lxxi 18. and lxxv. 9. and lxxvi. 1. and lxxix. 13 and xcvi. 2, 3. and ci. 1. and cvii. 22. and cxviii. 17. and cxlv. 6, 11, 12 Isa. xlii 12 and lxiv. 1, 2. Jer. 1, 10

† Exod. xiv. 17, 18. 1 Sam. xvii. 46. Psal. lxxxiii. 18. Isa. xlv. 3. Ezek. vi. 7, 10, 13, 14, and vii. 4, 9, 27. and xi. 10, 11, 12. and xii. 15, 16, 20. and xiii. 9, 14, 21, 23. and xiv. 8. and xv. 7. and xxi. 5. and xxii. 16. and xxv. 7, 11, 17. and xxvi. 6. and xxviii. 22, 23, 24. and xxix. 9, 16. and xxx. 8, 19, 25, 26. and xxxii. 15. and xxxiii. 29. and xxxv. 4, 12, 15. and xxxviii. 23, and xxxix. 6, 7, 21, 22.

Israel, at all times, as the matter shall require, that all the people of the earth may know that the Lord is God, and that there is none else." See other passages to the same purpose referred to in the margin.*

This is spoken of as the end of the eternal *damnation* of the wicked, and also the eternal *happiness* of the righteous. Rom. ix. 22, 23. "What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and make his power known, endured with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: and that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he hath afore prepared unto glory?"

This is spoken of, from time to time, as a great end of the *miracles* which God wrought. (See Exod. vii. 17. and viii. 10. and x. 2. Deut. xxix. 5, 6. Ezek. xxiv. 17.) And of the *ordinances* he has established. Exod. xxix. 44, 45, 46. "And I will sanctify also both Aaron and his sons, to minister to me in the priest's office. And I will dwell among the children of Israel, and will be their God. And they shall know that I am the Lord their God," &c. Chap. xxxi. 13. "Verily, my sabbaths shall ye keep; for it is a sign between me and you, throughout your generations; that ye may know that I am the Lord that doth sanctify you." We have again almost the same words, Ezek. xx. 12. and verse 20.

This was a great end of the redemption out of *Egypt*. Psal. cvi. 8. "Nevertheless he saved them for his name's sake, that *he might make his mighty power to be known*." (See also Exod. vii. 5. and Deut. iv. 34, 35.) And also of the redemption from the Babylonish captivity. Ezek. xx. 34—38. "And I will bring you out from the people, and will gather you out of the countries whither ye are scattered.—And I will bring you into the wilderness of the people; and there I will plead with you, as I pleaded with your fathers in the wilderness of the land of Egypt.—And I will bring you into the bond of the covenant. And I will purge out the rebels.—*And ye shall know that I am the Lord*." Verse 42. "*And ye shall know that I am the Lord*, when I shall bring you into the land of Israel." Verse 44. "*And ye shall know that I am the Lord*, when I have wrought with you *for my name's sake*." (See also, chap. xxviii. 25, 26. and xxxvi. 11. and xxxvii. 6, 13.)

This is also declared to be a great end of the work of *redemption by Jesus Christ*: both of its *purchase*, and its application. Rom. iii. 25, 26. "Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, *to declare his righteousness. —To declare, I say, at this time, his righteousness*: that he might be just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus." Eph.

* Exod. vi. 7. and vii. 22. and xvi. 12. 1 Kings viii. 43. and xx. 28. Psal. cii. 21. Ezek. xxiii. 49. and xxiv. 21. and xxv. 5. and xxxv. 9. and xxxix. 21, 22.

ii. 4,—7. "But God, who is rich in mercy, &c. *That he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace*, in his kindness towards us through Jesus Christ." Chap iii. 8, 9, 10. "To preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, and to make all men see what is the fellowship of that mystery which from the beginning of the world, hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ: *To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers* in heavenly places, might *be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God.*" Psal. xxii. 21, 22. "Save me from the lion's mouth." *I will declare thy name unto my brethren;* in the midst of the congregation will I praise thee." (Compared with Heb. ii. 12. and John xvii. 26.) Isa. lxiv. 4. "O that thou wouldest rend the heavens—*to make thy name known to thine adversaries.*"

And it is pronounced to be the end of that great, *actual salvation*, which should follow Christ's purchase of salvation, both among Jews and Gentiles. Isa. xlix. 22, 23. "I will lift up my hand to the Gentiles,—and they shall bring thy sons in their arms—and kings shall be thy nursing-fathers—*and thou shalt know that I am the Lord.*"*

This appears to be the end of God's *common Providence.* Job xxxvii. 6, 7. "For he saith to the snow, Be thou on the earth. Likewise to the small rain, and to the great rain of his strength. He sealeth up the hand of every man, that all men may know his work." And of the *day of judgment*, that grand consummation of God's moral government of the world, and the day for bringing all things to their designed ultimate issue. It is called, 'The day of the revelation of the righteous judgment of God, Rom. ii. 5.

And the *declaration*, or openly manifesting of God's excellency, is spoken of as the actual, happy consequence and effect of the work of creation. Psal. xix. 1, &c. "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth his handy-work. Day unto day uttereth speech, night unto night sheweth knowledge.—In them hath he placed a tabernacle for the sun, which is as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, and rejoicing as a strong man to run his race," &c.

3. In like manner, there are many scriptures that speak of God's PRAISE, in many of the forementioned respects, just in the same manner as of his *name* and *glory.*

This is spoken of as the end of the very *being* of God's people, in the same manner as before, Jer. xiii. 11. "For as the girdle cleaveth to the loins of a man, so have I caused to cleave unto me the whole house of Israel, and the whole house of Ju-

* See also, Ezek. xvi. 62. and xxix. 21. and xxxiv. 27. and xxxvi. 38. and xxxix. 28, 29. Joel iii. 17.

dah, saith the Lord: that they might be unto me for a name, *and for a praise*, and a glory."

It is spoken of as the end of the *moral world*. Matt. xxi. 16. "Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings *hast thou perfected praise*." That is, so hast thou in thy sovereignty and wisdom ordered it, that thou shouldest obtain the *great end* for which intelligent creatures are made, more especially from some of them that are in themselves weak, inferior, and more insufficient." (Compare Psal. viii. 1, 2.)

And the same thing that was observed before concerning the making known God's excellency, may also be observed concerning *God's praise*. That it is made use of as an argument in deprecating a state of destruction; that in such a state this end cannot be answered, in such a manner as seems to imply its being an ultimate end, for which God had made man. Psal. lxxxviii. 10. "Shall the dead arise and *praise thee?* Shall thy loving-kindness be declared in the grave?—Shall thy wonders be known in the dark?" Psal. xxx. 9. "What profit is there in my blood? When I go down to the pit, *shall the dust praise thee?* Shall it declare thy truth?" Psal. cxv. 17, 18. "The dead *praise not the Lord*, neither any that go down into silence: but we will *bless the Lord*, from this time forth and for evermore. *Praise ye the Lord.*" Isa. xxxviii. 18, 19. "For the grave *cannot praise thee*, death cannot celebrate thee; they that go down into the pit cannot hope for thy truth. The living, the living, *he shall praise thee.*" And God's praise is spoken of as the end of the *virtue* of God's people, in like manner as his glory. Phil. i. 11. "Being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ *to the praise and glory of God.*"

God's praise is the end of the *work of redemption*. In Eph. i. where that work in its various parts is particularly insisted on, and set forth in its exceeding glory, this is mentioned, from time to time, as the great end of all, that it should be "to the praise of his glory." As in ver. 6, 12, 14. By which we may doubtless understand much the same thing with what in Phil. i. 11. is expressed, "his praise and glory." Agreeably to this, Jacob's fourth son, from whom the great Redeemer was to proceed, by the special direction of God's Providence, was called PRAISE. This happy consequence, and glorious end of that great redemption, Messiah one of his posterity, was to work out.

In the Old Testament this praise is spoken of as the end of the forgiveness of God's people, and their salvation, in the same manner as God's name and glory. Isa. xlviii. 9, 10, 11. "For my name's sake will I defer mine anger, and for my *praise* will I refrain for thee, that I cut thee not off. Behold I have refined thee——for mine own sake, even for mine own

sake will I do it; for how should my name be polluted? and my glory will I not give to another." Jer. xxxiii. 8, 9. "And I will cleanse them from all their iniquity,——and I will pardon all their iniquities. And it shall be to me a name of joy, a *praise*, and an honour."

And that the *holy* part of the moral world express desires of this, and delight in it, as the end which holy principles in them tend to, reach after, and rest in, in their highest exercises —just in the same manner as the glory of God is abundantly manifest. It would be endless to enumerate particular places wherein this appears; wherein the saints declare this, by expressing their earnest desires of God's praise; calling on all nations, and all beings in heaven and earth to praise him; in a rapturous manner calling on one another, crying "Hallelujah; praise ye the Lord, praise him for ever." Expressing their resolutions to praise him as long as they live through all generations, and for ever; declaring how good, how pleasant and comely the *praise* of God is, &c. And it is manifest, that God's *praise* is the desirable and glorious consequence and effect of all the works of creation, by such places as these. Psal. cxlv. 5—10. and cxlviii. throughout, and ciii. 19—22.

SECT. V.

Places of Scripture from whence it may be argued, that communication of good to the Creature, was one thing which God had in View, as an ultimate End of the Creation of the World.

1. According to the scripture, *communicating good* to the creatures is what is *in itself* pleasing to God. And this is not merely subordinately agreeable, and esteemed valuable, on account of its *relation* to a further end, as it is in executing justice in punishing the sins of men; but what God is inclined to on its own account, and what he delights in simply and ultimately. For though God is sometimes in scripture spoken of as taking pleasure in punishing men's sins, Deut. xxviii. 63. "The Lord will rejoice over you, to destroy you." Ezek. v. 13. "Then shall mine anger be accomplished, and I will cause my fury to rest upon them, and I will be comforted." Yet God is often spoken of as exercising goodness and shewing mercy, with delight, in a manner quite different, and opposite to that of his executing wrath. For the latter is spoken of as what God proceeds to with backwardness and reluctance; the misery of the creature being not agreeable to him *on its own account*. Neh. ix. 17. "Thou art a God

ready to pardon, gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness." Psal. ciii. 8. "The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy." Psal. cxlv. 8. "The Lord is gracious and full of compassion, slow to anger, and of great mercy." We have again almost the same words. Jonah iv. 2. Mic vii. 18. "Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, &c.—He retaineth not his anger for ever, because he delighteth in mercy." Ezek. xviii. 32. "I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord God; wherefore turn yourselves, and live ye." Lam. iii. 33. "He doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men." Ezek. xxxiii. 11. "As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live: turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel!" 2 Pet. iii. 9. "Not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance."

2. The work of *redemption* wrought out by Jesus Christ, is spoken of in such a manner as, being from the grace and love of God to men, does not well consist with his seeking a communication of good to them, *only subordinately*. Such expressions as that in John iii. 16. carry another idea. "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him, should not perish, but have everlasting life." And 1 John iv. 9, 10. "In this was manifested the love of God towards us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. Herein is love; not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins." So Eph. ii. 4. "But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us," &c. But if indeed this was only from a regard to a *further* end, entirely diverse from our good; then all the love is truly terminated in that, its ultimate object, and *therein* is his love manifested, strictly and properly speaking, and not in that he *loved* us, or exercised such high regard towards us. For if our good be not at all regarded ultimately, but only subordinately, then our good or interest is, in itself considered, *nothing* in God's regard.

The scripture every where represents it, as though the great things Christ did and suffered were in the most *direct* and proper sense from exceeding *love to us*. Thus the apostle Paul represents the matter, Gal. ii. 20. "Who loved me, and gave himself for me." Eph. v. 25. "Husbands love your wives, even as Christ loved the church, and gave himself for it." And Christ himself, John xvii. 19. "For their sakes I sanctify myself." And the scripture represents Christ as resting in the salvation and glory of his people, when obtained, as in what he *ultimately* sought, as having therein reached the goal, obtained

the prize he aimed at, enjoying the travail of his soul in which he is satisfied, as the recompense of his labours and extreme agonies, Isa. liii. 10, 11. "When thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand. He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied; by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many, for he shall bear their iniquities." He sees the travail of his soul, in seeing his seed, the children brought forth as the result of his travail. This implies, that Christ has his delight, most truly and properly, in obtaining the salvation of his church, not merely as a means, but as what he rejoices and is satisfied in, *most directly* and properly. This is proved by those scriptures which represent him as rejoicing in his obtaining this fruit of his labour and purchase, as the bridegroom when he obtains his bride, Isaiah lxii. 5. "As the bridegroom rejoices over the bride, so shall thy God rejoice over thee." And how emphatical and strong to the purpose, are the expressions in Zeph. iii. 17. "The Lord thy God in the midst of thee is mighty; he will save, he will rejoice over thee with joy; he will rest in his love, he will rejoice over thee with singing." The same thing may be argued from Prov. viii. 30, 31. "Then was I by him, as one brought up with him: and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him: rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth, and my delights were with the sons of men." And from those places that speak of the saints as God's portion, his jewels and peculiar treasure, these things are abundantly confirmed, John xii. 23—32. But the particular consideration of what may be observed to the present purpose, in that passage of scripture, may be referred to the next section.

3. The communications of divine goodness, particularly forgiveness of sin and salvation, are spoken of from time to time, as being for God's *goodness'* sake, and for his *mercy's* sake, just in the same manner as they are spoken of as being for God's *name's* sake, in the places observed before. Psal. xxv. 7. "Remember not the sins of my youth, nor my transgressions: according to thy mercy remember thou me, *for thy goodness' sake*, O Lord." In the 11th verse, the psalmist says, "For my name's sake, O Lord pardon mine iniquity." Neh. ix. 31. "Nevertheless, *for thy great mercy's sake*, thou hast not utterly consumed them, nor forsaken them; for thou art a gracious and a merciful God." Psal. vi. 4. "Return, O Lord, deliver my soul: O save me *for thy mercy's sake*." Psal. xxxi. 16. "Make thy face to shine upon thy servant: save me *for thy mercy's sake*." Psal. xliv. 26. "Arise for our help; redeem us *for thy mercy's sake*." And here it may be observed, after what a remarkable manner God speaks of his love to the children of Israel in the wilderness, as though his

love were for love's sake, and his goodness were its own end and motive. Deut. vii. 7. 8. "The Lord did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people, for ye were the fewest of all people: *but because the Lord loved you.*"

4. That the government of the world in all its parts, is *for the good* of such as are to be the eternal subjects of God's goodness, is *implied* in what the scripture teaches us of Christ being set at God's right hand, made king of angels and men; set at the head of the universe, having all power given him in heaven and earth, *to that end* that he may promote their *happiness;* being made head over all things to the church, and having the government of the whole creation for their good.* Christ mentions it, Mark ii. 28. as the *reason* why the Son of man is made Lord of the Sabbath, because "the Sabbath was made for man." And if so, we may in like manner argue, that *all things* were made for man, because the Son of man is made *Lord of all things.*

5. That God uses the whole creation, in his government of it, for the good of his people, is most elegantly represented in Deut. xxxiii. 26. "There is none like unto the God of Jeshurun, who rideth upon the heaven." The whole universe is a machine, or chariot, which God hath made for his own use, as is represented in Ezekiel's vision. God's seat is heaven, where he sits and governs, Ezek. i. 22, 26—28. The inferior part of the creation, this visible universe, subject to such continual changes and revolutions, are the wheels of the chariot. God's providence, in the constant revolutions, alterations, and successive events, is represented by the motion of the wheels of the chariot, by the spirit of him who sits on his throne on the heavens, or above the firmament. Moses tells us for whose sake it is, that God moves the wheels of this chariot, or rides in it, sitting in his heavenly seat; and to what end he is making his progress, or goes his appointed journey in it, *viz. the salvation of his people.*

6. God's *judgments* on the wicked in this world, and also their eternal damnation in the world to come, are spoken of as being for *the happiness of God's people.* So are his judgments on them in this world. Isa. xliii. 3, 4. "For I am the Lord thy God, the holy one of Israel, thy Saviour. I gave Egypt for thy ransom, Ethiopia and Seba for thee. Since thou hast been precious in my sight, thou hast been honourable, and I have loved thee; therefore will I give men for thee, and people for thy life." So the works of God's vindictive justice and wrath, are spoken of as works of mercy to his people, Psal. cxxxvi. 10, 15, 17—20. And so is their eternal damnation in another world. Rom. ix. 22, 23. "What if God, willing to

* Eph. i. 20—23. John xvii. 2. Matt. xi. 27. and xxviii. 18, 19. John iii. 35.

shew his wrath and make his power known, endured with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: and that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory." Here it is evident the last verse comes in, in connection with the foregoing, as giving *another* reason of the destruction of the wicked, *viz. shewing the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy: higher degrees* of their glory and happiness, in a relish of their own enjoyments, and a greater sense of their value, and of God's free grace in bestowing them.

7. It seems to argue, that God's goodness to them who are to be the eternal subjects of his goodness is the end of the creation; since the whole creation, in all its parts, is spoken of as THEIRS. 1 Cor. iii. 22, 23. "*All things are yours*, whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come, *all are yours.*" The terms are very universal; and both works of creation and providence are mentioned; and it is manifestly the design of the apostle to be understood of every work of God whatsoever. Now, how can we understand this any otherwise, than that all things are for their benefit; and that God made and uses all for their good?

8. All God's works, both of creation and providence, are represented as works of *goodness* or *mercy* to his people; as in the 136th psalm. His wonderful works *in general.* verse 4. "To him who alone doth great wonders; for his mercy endureth for ever." The works of *creation* in all its parts." Ver. 5—9. "To him that by wisdom made the heavens; for his mercy endureth for ever. To him that stretched out the earth above the waters; for his mercy endureth for ever. To him that made great lights; for his mercy endureth for ever. The sun to rule by day; for his mercy endureth for ever. The moon and stars to rule by night; for his mercy endureth for ever." And God's works of *providence*, in the following part of the psalm.

9. That expression in the blessed sentence pronounced on the righteous at the day of judgment. "Inherit the kingdom *prepared for you* from the foundation of the world," seems to hold forth thus much, that the fruits of God's goodness to them was his end in creating the world, and in his providential disposals: that God in all his works, in laying the foundation of the world, and ever since the foundation of it, had been preparing this kingdom and glory for them.

10. Agreeable to this, the *good of men* is spoken of as an ultimate end of the *virtue of the moral world.* Rom. xiii. 8, 9, 10. "He that loveth another hath fulfilled the law. For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, &c.—— And if there be any other commandment, it is briefly com-

prehended in this saying, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. *Love worketh no ill to his neighbour; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.*" Gal. v. 14. "All the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this, *Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.*" Jam. ii. 8. "If ye fulfil the royal law, according to the scripture, *Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself*, thou shalt do well."

If the *good of the creature* be one end of God in all he does; and in all he requires moral agents to do; an end by which they should regulate all their conduct; these things may be easily explained: but otherwise, it seems difficult to be accounted for, that the Holy Ghost should thus express himself. The scripture represents it to be the spirit of all true saints, to prefer the welfare of God's people to their chief joy. This was the spirit of Moses and the *prophets* of old: the good of God's church was an end by which they regulated all their conduct. And so it was with the *apostles.* 2 Cor. iv. 15. "For all things are *for your sakes.*" 2 Tim. ii. 10. "I endure all things *for the elects' sake*, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus, with eternal glory." And the scriptures represent it, as though every christian should, in all he does, be employed for the good of the church, as each particular member is employed for the good of the body. Rom. xii. 4, 5, &c. Eph. iv. 15, 16. 1 Cor. xii. 12, 25, &c. To this end, the scripture teaches us, the angels are continually employed. Heb. i. 14.

SECT. VI.

Wherein is considered what is meant by the Glory of God, and the Name of God in Scripture, when spoken of as God's end in his Works.

Having thus considered what are spoken of in the holy scriptures, as the *ends* which God had *ultimately* in view in the creation of the world, I now proceed particularly to enquire what they are, and how the terms are to be understood?

1. Let us begin with the phrase, the Glory of God.—And here I might observe, that it is sometimes used to signify the second person in the Trinity; but it is not necessary, at this time, to prove it from particular passages of scripture. Omiting this, I proceed to observe some things concerning the Hebrew word (כבוד) which is most commonly used in the Old Testament, where we have the word *glory* in the English Bible. The root it comes from, is either the verb (כבד), which signifies *to be heavy*, or make heavy, or from the adjective (כבד) which signifies *heavy* or weighty. These, as seems pretty

manifest, are the primary signification of these words, though they have also other meanings, which seem to be derivative. The noun (כובד) signifies *gravity*, heaviness, *greatness*, and abundance. Of very many places it will be sufficient to specify a few. Prov. xxvii. 3. 2 Sam. xiv. 26. 1 Kings xii. 11. Psal. xxxviii. 4. Isa. xxx. 27. And as the weight of bodies arises from two things, *density*, and *magnitude;* so we find the word used to signify *dense*, Exod. xix. 16. (כבד ענן *nubes gravis*, Vulg. *densissima*) *a dense cloud;* and is very often used for *great*. Isa. xxxii. 2. Gen. v. 9. 1 Kings x. 2. 2 Kings vi. 14. and xviii. 17. Isa. xxxvi. 2. &c.

The Hebrew word (כבוד) which is commonly translated *glory*, is used in such a manner as might be expected from this signification of the words from whence it comes. Sometimes it is used to signify what is *internal*, *inherent*, or in the *possession* of the person: and sometimes for *emanation*, *exhibition*, or *communication* of this internal glory: and sometimes for the *knowledge*, or *sense* of these, in those to whom the exhibition or communication is made; or an *expression* of this knowledge, sense, or effect. And here I would note, that agreeable to the use of this word in the Old Testament, is the Greek word (δοξα) in the New. For as the word (כבוד) is generally translated by the just mentioned Greek word (δοξα) in the septuagint; so it is apparent, that this word is designed to be used to signify the *same thing* in the New Testament with the other in the Old. This might be abundantly proved, by comparing particular places of the Old Testament; but propably it will not be denied. I therefore proceed particularly to consider these words, with regard to their use in scripture, in each of the fore-mentioned ways.

1. The word *glory* denotes sometimes what is *internal:* When the word is used to signify what is within, or in the possession of the subject, it very commonly signifies *excellency*, dignity, or worthiness of regard. This, according to the Hebrew *idiom*, is as it were, the *weight* of a thing, as that by which it is heavy; as to be *light*, is to be worthless, without value, contemptible. Numb. xxi. 5. "This *light* bread." 1 Sam. xviii. 23. "Seemeth it a *light* thing. Judg. ix. 4. "*Light* persons," *i. e.* worthless, vain, vile persons. So Zeph. iii. 4. To set *light* by is to despise. 2 Sam. xix. 43. Belshazzar's vileness in the sight of God, is represented by his being *Tekel*, weighed in the balances and found *light*, Dan. v. 27. And as the weight of a thing arises from its *magnitude*, and its specific *gravity* conjunctly; so the word *glory* is very commonly used to signify the *excellency* of a person or thing, as consisting either in *greatness*, or in *beauty*, or in both conjunctly; as

will abundantly appear by considering the places referred to in the margin.*

Sometimes that internal, great and excellent good, which is called glory, is rather in *possession*, than inherent. Any one may be called *heavy*, that possesses an abundance; and he that is empty and destitute, may be called *light*. Thus we find riches are sometimes called *glory*. Gen. xxxi. 1. "And of that which was our fathers' hath he gotten *all this glory*." Esth. v. 11. "Haman told them of the *glory of his riches*." Psal. xlix. 16, 17. "Be not afraid when one is made rich, when the *glory of his house* is increased. For when he dieth he shall carry nothing away, his *glory* shall not descend after him." Nah. ii. 9. "Take ye the spoil of silver, take the spoil of gold; for there is none end of the store and *glory* out of the pleasant furniture."

And it is often put for a great height of prosperity, and fulness of good in general. Gen. xlv. 13. "You shall tell my father of *all my glory* in Egypt." Job xix. 9. "He hath stripped me of *my glory*." Isa. x. 3. "Where will you leave your glory." Ver. 16. "Therefore shall the Lord of hosts send among his fat ones leanness, and under his *glory* shall he kindle a burning, like the burning of a fire." Isa. xvii. 3, 4. "The kingdom shall cease from Damascus, and the remnant of Syria; they shall be as the *glory* of the children of Israel. And in that day, it shall come to pass, that the *glory* of Jacob shall be made thin, and the fatness of his flesh shall be made lean." Isa. xxi. 16. "And all the *glory* of Kedar shall fail." Isa. lxi. 6. "Ye shall eat the riches of the Gentiles, and in their *glory* shall ye boasts yourselves." Chap. lxvi. 11, 12. "That ye may milk out, and be delighted with the abundance of her *glory*.—I will extend peace to her like a river, and the glory of the Gentiles like a flowing stream." Hos. ix. 11. "As for Ephraim, their *glory* shall fly away as a bird." Matth. iv. 8. "Sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the *glory* of them." Luke xxiv. 26. "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his *glory?*" John xvii. 22. "And the *glory* which thou gavest me, have I given them." Rom. v. 2. "And rejoice in hope of the *glory* of God." Chap. viii. 18. "The sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the *glory* which shall be revealed in us." (See also chap. ii. 7, 10. and iii. 23. and ix. 23.) 1 Cor. ii. 7. "The hidden wisdom

* Exod. xvi. 7. and xxviii. 2, 40, and iii. 8. Numb. xvi. 19. Deut. v. 24. and xxviii. 58. 2 Sam. vi. 20. 1 Chron. xvi. 24. Esth. i. 4. Job xxix. 20. Psal. xix. 1. and xlv. 13. and lxiii. 3. and lxvi. 3. and lxvii. 6. and lxxxvii. 3. and cii. 16. and cxlv. 5, 12, 13. Isa. iv. 2. and x. 18. and xvi. 40. and xxxv. 21. and xl. 5, and lx. 13. and lxii. 2. Ezek. xxxi. 18. Hab. ii. 14. Hag. ii. 3, 9. Matt. vi. 29. and xvi. 27. and xxiv. 30. Luke ix. 31, 32. John i. 14. and ii. 11. and xi. 40. Rom. vi. 4. 1 Cor. ii. 8. and xv. 40. 2 Cor. iii. 10. Eph. iii. 21. Col. i. 11. 2 Thess. i. 9. Tit. ii. 13. 1 Pet. i. 24. 2 Pet. i. 17.

which God ordained before the world, unto our *glory*." 2 Cor. iv. 17.—"Worketh out for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of *glory*." Eph. i. 18. "And what the riches of the *glory* of his inheritance in the saints." 1 Pet. iv. 13. "But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are made partakers of Christ's sufferings; that when his *glory* shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy." Chap. i. 8. "Ye rejoice, with joy unspeakable and full of *glory*."*

2. The word *glory* is used in scripture often to express the *exhibition*, *emanation*, or *communication* of the internal glory. Hence it often signifies an effulgence, or shining brightness, by an emanation of beams of light. Thus the brightness of the sun, and moon, and stars, is called their *glory*. in 1 Cor. xv. 41. But in particular, the word is very often thus used, when applied to God and Christ. As in Ezek. i. 28. "As the appearance of the bow that is in the cloud in the day of rain, so was the appearance of the brightness round about. This was the appearance of the likeness of the *glory* of the Lord." And chap. x. 4. "Then the *glory* of the Lord went up from the cherub, and stood over the threshold of the house, and the house was filled with the cloud, and the court was full of the brightness of the Lord's *glory*." Isa. vi. 1, 2, 3. "I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple. Above it stood the seraphim—And one cried to another, and said, "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts, the whole earth is full of his *glory*." Compared with John xii. 41. "These things said Esaias, when he saw his *glory* and spake of him." Ezek. xliii. 2. "And behold the *glory* of the God of Israel came from the way of the east.—And the earth *shined* with his *glory*." Isa. xxiv. 23. "Then the moon shall be confounded, and the sun ashamed, when the Lord of hosts shall reign in mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before his ancients *gloriously*." Isa. lx. 1, 2. "Arise, shine, for thy light is come, and the *glory* of the Lord is risen upon thee. For behold the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people; but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and his *glory* shall be seen upon thee." Together with verse 19.—"The sun shall be no more thy light by day, neither for brightness shall the moon give light unto thee: but the Lord shall be unto thee an everlasting light, and thy God thy *glory*." Luke ii. 9. "The *glory* of the Lord shone round about them." Acts xxii. 11. "And when I could not see for the glory of that light." In 2 Cor. iii. 7. the shining of Moses's face is called *the glory of his countenance*. And to this Christ's glory is compared, verse 18. "But we all with open face, beholding as in

* See also, Colos. i. 27. and iii. 4. 1 Thes. ii. 12. 2 Thes. ii. 14. 1 Tim. iii. 16. 2 Tim. ii. 10. Heb. ii. 10. 1 Pet. i. 11, 21. and v. 10. 2 Pet. i. 3. Rev. xxi. 24, 26. Psal. lxxiii. 24. and cxlix. 5. Isa. xl. 10.

a glass, the *glory* of the Lord, are changed into the same image, *from glory to glory*." And so chap. iv. 4. "Lest the light of the *glorious* gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them." Ver. 6. "For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the *glory* of God in the face of Jesus Christ." Heb. i. 3. "Who is the *brightness* of his *glory*." The apostle Peter, speaking of that emanation of exceeding brightness, from the bright cloud that overshadowed the disciples in the mount of transfiguration, and of the shining of Christ's face at that time, says, 2 Pet. i. 17. "For he received from God the Father honour and *glory*, when there came such a voice to him from the *excellent glory*, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Rev. xviii. 1. "Another angel came down from heaven, having great power, *and the earth was lightened with his glory*." Rev. xxi. 11. "Having the *glory* of God, and her *light* was like unto a stone most precious, like a jasper stone, clear as crystal." Ver. 23. "And the city had no need of the sun, nor of the moon, to shine in it; for the *glory* of God did lighten it." See the word for a *visible effulgence* or emanation of light in the places to be seen in the margin.*

The word *glory*, as applied to God or Christ, sometimes evidently signifies the *communications* of God's *fulness*, and means much the same thing with God's abundant goodness and grace. So Eph. iii. 16. "That he would grant you, *according to the riches of his glory*, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man." The expression, "According to the riches of his glory," is apparently equivalent to that in the same epistle, chap. i. 7. "According to the riches of his grace." And chapter ii. 7. "The exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness towards us, through Christ Jesus."—In like manner is the word *glory* used in Phil. iv. 19. "But my God shall supply all your need, according to his *riches in glory*, by Christ Jesus." And Rom. ix. 23. "And that he might make known the *riches of his glory*, on the vessels of mercy." In this and the foregoing verse, the apostle speaks of God's making known two things, his *great wrath*, and his *rich grace*. The former on the vessels of wrath, ver. 22. The latter, which he calls *the riches of his glory*, on the vessels of mercy, ver. 23. So when Moses says, "I beseech thee shew me thy *glory*;" God granting his request, makes answer, "I

* Exod. xvi. 12. and xxiv. 16, 17, 23. and xl. 34, 35. Lev. ix. 6, 23. Numb. xiv. 10. and xvi. 19. 1 Kings viii. 11. 2 Chron. v. 14. and vii. 1, 2, 3. Isa. lviii. 8. Ezek. iii. 23. and viii. 4. and ix. 3. and x. 18, 19. and xi. 22, 23. and xliii. 4, 5. and xliv. 4. Acts vii. 55. Rev. xv. 8.

will make all my *goodness* to pass before thee." Exod. xxxiii. 18, 19.*

What we find in John xii. 23—32, is worthy of particular notice in this place. The words and behaviour of Christ, of which we have here an account, argue two things.

(1.) That the happiness and salvation of men was an end that Christ ultimately aimed at in his labours and sufferings.—The very same things which were observed before, (chapter second, section third) concerning God's *glory*, are in the same manner observable concerning the salvation of men.—Christ in the near approach of the most extreme difficulties which attended his undertaking, comforts himself in a certain prospect of obtaining the *glory of God*, as his great end. And at the same time, and exactly in the same manner is the *salvation of men* mentioned, as the end of these great labours and sufferings, which satisfied his soul in the prospect of undergoing them. (Compare the 23d and 24th verses; and also the 28th and 29th verses; ver. 31. and 32.)

(2.) The glory of God, and the emanations and fruits of his grace in man's salvation are so spoken of by Christ on this occasion in just the same manner, that it would be quite unnatural to understand him as speaking of two distinct things. Such is the connection, that what he says of the latter must most naturally be understood as exegetical of the former. He first speaks of his *own glory*, and the *glory of his Father*, as the great end that should be obtained by what he was about to suffer; and then explains and amplifies this, in what he expresses of the *salvation of men* that shall be obtained by it. Thus in the 23d verse, he says, "The hour is come that the Son of man should be glorified." And in what next follows, he evidently shews how he was to be glorified, or wherein his glory consisted: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, except a corn of wheat fall into the ground, and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." As *much fruit* is the *glory* of the seed, so is the multitude of redeemed ones, which should spring from his death, his glory.† So concerning the glory of his Father, in the 27th and following verses. "Now is my soul

* Dr. Goodwin observes, (Vol. I. of his works, part 2d, page 166,) that riches of grace are called *riches of glory* in scripture. "The scripture," says he, "speaks of riches of glory in Eph. iii. 6. *That he would grant you according to the riches of his glory;* yet eminently *mercy* is there intended; for it is that which God bestows, and which the apostle there prayeth for. And he calls his *mercy* there his *glory*, as elsewhere he doth, as being the most eminent excellency in God. —That in Rom. ix. 22, 23. compared, is observable. In the 22d verse, where the apostle speaks of God's making known the power of his wrath, saith he, God willing to shew his wrath, and make his power known. But in verse 3d, when he comes to speak of mercy, he saith, That he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy."

† Here may be remembered what was before observed of the church being so often spoken of as the glory and fulness of Christ.

troubled, and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour! But for this cause came I unto this hour. Father, *glorify thy name.* Then came there a voice from heaven, saying, *I have both glorified it*, and *will glorify it again.*" In an assurance of this, which this voice declared, Christ was *greatly comforted*, and his soul even *exulted* under the view of his approaching sufferings. And what this glory was in which Christ's soul was so comforted on this occasion, his own words plainly shew. When the people said, it thundered; and others said, an angel spake to him; Then Christ tells them what this voice meant. Ver. 30—32. "Jesus answered and said, This voice came not because of me, but for your sakes. Now is the judgment of this world; now shall the prince of this world be cast out. And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me." By this behaviour, and these speeches of our Redeemer, it appears, that the expressions of *divine grace*, in the sanctification and happiness of the redeemed, are especially that *glory* of his, and his Father, which was the *joy that was set before him*, for which he endured the cross, and despised the shame: and that this glory especially, was the end of the travail of his soul, in obtaining which end he was satisfied. (Isa. liii. 10, 11.)

This is agreeable to what has been just observed, of God's glory being so often represented by an effulgence, or emanation, or communication of light, from a luminary or fountain of light. What can so naturally and aptly represent the emanation of the internal glory of God; or the flowing forth, and abundant communication of that infinite fulness of good that is in God? Light is very often in scripture put for comfort, joy, happiness, and for good in general*.

3. Again, the word *glory*, as applied to God in scripture, implies the *view* or *knowledge* of God's excellency. The exhibition of glory, is to the *view* of beholders. The manifestation of glory, the emanation or effulgence of brightness, has relation to the *eye*. Light or brightness is a quality that has relation to the *sense* of seeing; we see the luminary by its light. And *knowledge* is often expressed in scripture by light. The word *glory* very often in scripture signifies or implies *honour*, as any one may soon see by casting his eye on a concordance †. But *honour* implies the *knowledge* of the dig-

* Isa. vi. 3.—"Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts, the whole earth is full of his *glory.*" In the original, *His glory is the fulness of the whole earth*: which signifies much more than the words of the translation. God's glory, consisting especially in his holiness, is that, in the sight or communications of which man's fulness, *i. e.* his holiness and happiness, consists. By *God's glory* here, there seems to be respect to those effulgent beams that filled the temple: these beams signifying God's glory shining forth and communicated. This effulgence or communication, is the fulness of all intelligent creatures, who have no fulness of their own.

† See particularly, Heb. iii. 3.

nity and excellency of him who hath the honour; and this is often more especially signified by the word *glory*, when applied to God. Num. xiv. 21. "But as truly as I live, all the earth shall be filled with *glory* of the Lord," *i. e.* All the inhabitants of the earth shall *see* the manifestations I will make of my perfect holiness and hatred of sin, and so of my infinite excellence. This appears by the context. So Ezek. xxxix. 21, 22, 23. "And I will set my glory among the heathen, and all the heathen *shall see* my judgment that I have executed, and my hand that I have laid upon them. So the house of Israel *shall know* that I am the Lord their God. And the heathen *shall know* that the house of Israel went into captivity for their iniquity." And it is manifest in many places, where we read of God glorifying himself, or of his being glorified, that one thing, directly intended, is *making known* his divine greatness and excellency.

4. Again, *glory*, as the word is used in scripture, often signifies or implies *praise*. This appears from what was observed before, that glory very often signifies *honour*, which is much the same thing with praise, *viz.* high esteem and the expression of it in words and actions. And it is manifest that the words *glory* and *praise*, are often used as equivalent expressions in scripture. Psal. l. 23. "Whoso offereth *praise*, *glorifieth* me." Psal. xxii. 23. "Ye that fear the Lord, *praise* him; all ye seed of Israel, *glorify* him." Isa. xlii. 8. "My *glory* I will not give unto another, nor my *praise* to graven images." Ver. 12. "Let them give *glory* unto the *Lord*, and declare his *praise* in the islands." Isa. xlviii. 9—11. "For my *name's* sake will I defer mine anger; for my *praise* will I refrain for thee.—For mine *own sake* will I do it; for—I will not give my *glory* unto another." Jer. xiii. 11. "That they might be unto me for a people, and for a *name*, and for a *praise*, and for a *glory*." Eph. i. 6. "To the *praise* of the *glory* of his grace." Ver. 12. "To the *praise* of his *glory*." So verse 14. The phrase is apparently equivalent to this, Phil. i. 11. "Which are by Jesus Christ unto the *praise* and *glory* of God." 2 Cor. iv. 15. "That the abundant grace might, through the *thanksgiving* of many, redound to the *glory of God*."

It is manifest the *praise of God*, as the phrase is used in scripture, implies the high *esteem* and love of the heart, exalting thoughts of God, and complacence in his excellence and perfection. This is manifest to every one acquainted with the scripture. However, if any need satisfaction, they may, among innumerable other places which might be mentioned, turn to those in the margin."*

* Psal. cxlv. 1.—12 and xxxiv. 1, 2, 3. and xliv. 8. and lxxi. 14, 15. and xcix. 2, 3. and cvii. 31, 32. and cviii. 3, 4, 5. and cxix. 164. and cxlviii. 13. and cl. 2 Rev. xix. 1, 2, 3.——

It also implies joy in God, or *rejoicing* in his perfections, as is manifest by Psal. xxxiii. 2. "*Rejoice* in the Lord, O ye righteous, for *praise* is comely for the upright." Other passages to the same purpose, see in the margin.* How often do we read of *singing praise?* But *singing* is commonly an expression of *joy*. It is called, making a *joyful noise.*† And as it is often used, it implies *gratitude* or *love* to God for his benefits to us.‡

II. Having thus considered what is implied in the phrase, *the glory of God*, as we find it used in scripture; I proceed to inquire what is meant by the NAME of God.

God's *name* and his *glory*, at least very often, signify the same thing in scripture. As it has been observed concerning the glory of God, that it sometimes signifies the second person in the Trinity; the same might be shewn of the *name* of God, if it were needful in this place. But that the name and glory of God are often equipollent expressions, is manifest by Exod. xxxiii. 18, 19. When Moses says, "I beseech thee, shew me *thy glory*," and God grants his request, he says, "I will proclaim the *name* of the Lord before thee." Psal. viii. 1. "O Lord, how excellent is thy *name* in all the earth! Who hast set thy *glory* above the heavens." Psal. lxxix. 9. "Help us! O God of our salvation, for the *glory* of thy *name;* and deliver us, and purge away our sins for thy *name's* sake." Psal. cii. 15. "So the heathen shall fear the *name* of the Lord; and all the kings of the earth thy *glory*." Psal. cxlviii. 13. "His *name* alone is excellent, and his *glory* is above the earth and heaven." Isa. xlviii. 9. "For my *name's* sake will I defer mine anger, and for my *praise* will I refrain for thee." Ver. 11. "For mine own sake, even for mine own sake will I do it: for how should my *name* be polluted? And I will not give my *glory* unto another." Isa. lix. 19. "They shall fear the *name* of the Lord from the west, and his *glory* from the rising of the sun." Jer. xiii. 11. "That they might be unto me for a *name*, and for a *praise*, and for a glory." As *glory* often implies the *manifestation*, *publication*, and *knowledge* of excellency, and the *honour* that any one has in the world; so does *name*. Gen. xi. 4. "Let us make us a *name*." Deut. xxvi. 19. "And to make thee high above all nations, in praise, in name, and in honour.§"

* Psal. ix. 1, 2, 14 and xxviii 7. and xxxv. 27, 28 and xlii 4. and lxiii 5. and lxvii. 3, 4, 5. and lxxi. 22, 23. and civ. 33, 34. and cvi. 47. and cxxxv. 3. and cxlvii. 1. and cxlix. 1, 2, 5, 6. Acts ii. 46, 47. and iii. 8. Rev. xix. 6, 7.

† Psal. lxvi. 1, 2. and xcvi. 4. 5.

‡ Psal. xxx. 12. and xxxv. 18. and lxiii. 3, 4, and lxvi. 8, 9. and lxxi. 6, 7, 8. and lxxix. 13. and xcviii. 4, 5. and c. 4. and cvii. 21, 22. and cxxxviii. 2. And many other places.

§ See also, 2 Sam. vii. 9. and viii. 13. and xxiii. 18. Neh. ix. 10. Job. xxx. 8. Prov. xxii. 1. Many other places import the same thing.

So it is evident, that by *name* is sometimes meant much the same thing as *praise*, by several places which have been just mentioned, (as Isa. xlviii. 9. Jer. xiii. 11. Deut. xxvi. 19.) And also by Jer. xxxiii. 9. "And it shall be unto me for a *name*, a *praise*, and an *honour*, before all the nations of the earth, which shall hear of all the good I do unto them." Zeph. iii. 20. "I will make you a *name* and a *praise* among all people of the earth."

And it seems that the expression or exhibition of God's *goodness* is especially called his *name*, in Exod. xxxiii. 19. "I will make all my goodness pass before thee, and I will proclaim the *name* of the Lord before thee." And chap. xxxiv. 5, 6, 7. "And the Lord descended in the cloud, and stood with him there, and proclaimed the *name* of the Lord. And the Lord passed by before him, and proclaimed the Lord, the Lord God *gracious and merciful, long-suffering* and abundant in *goodness and truth;* keeping *mercy* for thousands," &c.

And the same illustrious brightness and *effulgence* in the pillar of cloud that appeared in the wilderness, and dwelt above the mercy-seat in the tabernacle and temple, (or rather the spiritual, divine brightness and effulgence *represented* by it,) so often called *the glory of the Lord*, is also often called *the name of the Lord.* Because God's glory was to dwell in the tabernacle, therefore he promises, Exod. xxix. 43. "There will I meet with the children of Israel, and the tabernacle shall be sanctified by my *glory.*" And the temple was called *the house of God's glory*, Isa. lx. 7. In like manner, the *name* of God is said to dwell in the sanctuary. Thus we often read of the place that God chose, *to put his name there;* or, as it is in the Hebrew, *to cause his* NAME *to inhabit there.* So it is sometimes rendered by our translators. As Deut. xii. 11. "Then there shall be a place which the Lord your God shall choose *to cause his name to dwell there.*" And the temple is often spoken of as built *for God's name.* And in Psalm. lxxiv. 7. the temple is called *the dwelling-place of God's name.* The mercy-seat in the temple was called the throne of God's name or glory, Jer. xiv. 21. "Do not abhor us, for thy *name's sake*, do not disgrace the *throne of thy glory.*" Here God's *name* and his *glory*, seem to be spoken of as the same.

SECT. VII.

Shewing, that the ultimate End of the Creation of the World is but one, and what that one end is.

From what has been observed in the last section, it appears, if the whole of what is said relating to this affair be duly weighed, and one part compared with another, we shall have reason to think that the design of the Spirit of God is not to represent God's ultimate end as *manifold*, but as ONE. For though it be signified by various names, yet they appear not to be names of *different* things, but various names involving each other in their meaning; either different names of the *same thing*, or names of several parts of *one whole;* or of the same whole viewed in *various lights*, or in its *different respects* and relations. For it appears, that all that is ever spoken of in the scripture as an ultimate end of God's works, is included in that one phrase, *the glory of God;* which is the name by which the ultimate end of God's works is most commonly called in scripture; and seems most aptly to signify the thing.

The thing signified by that name, *the glory of God*, when spoken of as the supreme and ultimate end of all God's works, is the emanation and true external expression of God's internal glory and fulness; meaning by his *fulness*, what has already been explained; or, in other words, God's internal glory, in a true and just exhibition, or external existence of it. It is confessed, that there is a degree of obscurity in these definitions; but perhaps an obscurity which is unavoidable, through the imperfection of language to express things of so sublime a nature. And therefore the thing may possibly be better understood, by using a variety of expressions, by a particular consideration of it, as it were, by parts, than by any short definition.

It includes the *exercise* of God's perfections to produce a proper *effect*, in opposition to their lying eternally dormant and ineffectual: as his power being eternally without any act or fruit of that power; his wisdom eternally ineffectual in any wise production, or prudent disposal of any thing, &c. The *manifestation* of his internal glory to created understandings. The *communication* of the infinite fulness of God to the creature. The creature's high *esteem* of God, love to him, and complacence and joy in him; and the proper *exercises* and *expressions* of these.

These at first view may appear to be entirely distinct things: but if we more closely consider the matter, they will all appear to be ONE thing, in a variety of views and relations.

They are all but the *emanation of God's glory ;* or the excellent brightness and fulness of the divinity *diffused, overflowing*, and as it were *enlarged ;* or in one word, *existing ad extra.* God *exercising* his perfection to produce a proper *effect*, is not distinct from the emanation or *communication* of his *fulness :* for this is the effect, viz. his *fulness communicated*, and the producing of this effect is the communication of his fulness ; and there is nothing in this effectual exerting of God's perfection, but the emanation of God's internal glory.

Now God's *internal* glory is either in his understanding or will. The glory or fulness of his *understanding* is his knowledge. The internal glory and fulness of God, having its special seat in his *will*, is his holiness and happiness. The *whole* of God's *internal* good or glory is in these three things, viz. his infinite *knowledge ;* his infinite virtue or *holiness*, and his infinite joy and *happiness.* Indeed there are a great many attributes in God, according to our way of conceiving them : but all may be reduced to these ; or to their degree, circumstances and relations. We have no conception of God's *power*, different from the degree of these things, with a certain relation of them to effects. God's *infinity* is not properly a distinct *kind* of good, but only expresses the *degree* of good there is in him. So God's *eternity* is not a distinct good ; but is the duration of good. His *immutability* is still the same good, with a negation of change. So that, as I said, the *fulness* of the Godhead is the fulness of his *understanding*, consisting in his knowledge ; and the fulness of his *will*, consisting in his virtue and happiness.

And therefore, the *external* glory of God consists in the *communication* of these. The communication of his knowledge is chiefly in giving the *knowledge of himself :* for this is the knowledge in which the fulness of God's understanding chiefly consists. And thus we see how the manifestation of God's glory to created understandings, and their seeing and knowing it, is not distinct from an emanation or communication of God's fulness, but clearly implied in it. Again, the communication of God's virtue or holiness is principally in communicating the *love of himself.* And thus we see how, not only the creature's seeing and knowing God's excellence, but also supremely esteeming and loving him, belongs to the communication of *God's fulness.* And the communication of God's joy and happiness consists chiefly in communicating to the creature that happiness and joy which consists in *rejoicing in God*, and in his glorious excellency ; for in such joy God's own happiness does principally consist. And in these things, *knowing* God's excellency, *loving* God for it, and *rejoicing* in it ; and in the *exercise* and *expression* of these, consists God's honour and praise ; so that these are clearly implied in that

glory of God, which consists in the *emanation* of his internal glory.

And though all these things, which seem to be so various, are signified by that glory which the scripture speaks of as the ultimate end of all God's works; yet it is manifest there is no greater, and no other variety in it, than in the internal and essential glory of God itself. God's internal glory is partly in his understanding, and partly in his will. And this internal glory, as seated in the will of God, implies both his holiness and his happiness: both are evidently God's glory, according to the use of the phrase. So that as God's external glory is only the emanation of his internal, this variety necessarily follows. And again, it hence appears that here is no other variety or distinction, but what necessarily arises from the distinct faculties of the creature to which the communication is made, as created in the image of God: even as having these two faculties of understanding and will. God communicates himself to the *understanding* of the creature, in giving him the *knowledge* of his glory; and to the *will* of the creature, in giving him *holiness*, consisting primarily in the love of God: and in giving the creature *happiness* chiefly consisting in *joy* in God. These are the sum of that emanation of divine fulness called in scripture, *the glory of God*. The first part of this glory is called *truth*, the latter *grace*, John i. 14. "We beheld his *glory*, the glory of the only begotten of the Father, full of *grace* and *truth*."

Thus we see that the great end of God's works, which is so variously expressed in scripture, is indeed but ONE; and this *one* end is most properly and comprehensively called, THE GLORY OF GOD; by which name it is most commonly called in scripture; and is fitly compared to an effulgence or emanation of light from a luminary. Light is the external expression, exhibition, and manifestation of the excellency of the luminary, of the sun for instance: It is the abundant, extensive emanation and communication of the fulness of the sun to innumerable beings that partake of it. It is by this that the sun itself is seen, and his glory beheld, and all other things are discovered: it is by a participation of this communication from the sun, that surrounding objects receive all their lustre, beauty, and brightness. It is by this that all nature receives life, comfort, and joy. Light is abundantly used in scripture to represent and signify these three things, knowledge, holiness, and happiness.*

* It is used to signify *knowledge*, or that manifestation and evidence by which knowledge is received. Psal. xix. 8. and cxix. 105, 135. Prov. vi. 23, Isa. viii. 20. and ix. 2. and xxix. 18. Dan. v. 11. Eph. v. 13. "But all things that are reproved, are made manifest by the light; for whatsoever doth make manifest is light," &c.

What has been said may be sufficient to shew, how those things, which are spoken of in scripture as ultimate ends of God's works, though they may seem at first view to be distinct, are all plainly to be reduced to this *one* thing, *viz. God's internal glory or fulness existing in its emanation.* And though God in seeking this end, seeks the creature's good; yet therein appears his supreme regard to himself.

The emanation or communication of the divine fulness, consisting in the knowledge of God, love to him, and joy in him, has relation indeed both to *God* and the *creature:* but it has relation to God as its *fountain*, as the thing communicated, is something of his internal fulness. The water in the stream is something of the fountain; and the beams of the sun are something of the sun. And again they have relation to God as their *object:* for the knowledge communicated is the knowledge of God; and the love communicated, is the love of God: and the happiness communicated, is joy in God. In the creature's knowing, esteeming, loving, rejoicing in, and praising God, the glory of God is both *exhibited* and *acknowledged;* his fulness is *received* and *returned.* Here is both an *emanation* and *remanation.* The refulgence shines upon and into the creature, and is reflected back to the luminary. The beams of glory come from God, are something of God, and are refunded back again to their original. So that the whole is *of* God, and *in* God, and *to* God; and he is the beginning, and the middle, and the end.

And though it be true that God has respect to the *creature* in these things; yet his respect to himself, and to the creature, are not properly a double and divided respect. What has been said (chap. I. sect. 3, 4.) may be sufficient to shew this. Nevertheless, it may not be amiss here briefly to say a few things; though mostly implied in what has been said already.

When God was about to create the world, he had respect to that *emanation of his glory*, which is *actually* the consequence of the creation, both with regard to himself and the creature. He had regard to it as an *emanation* from himself, a *communication* of himself, and, as the *thing communicated*, in its nature *returned* to himself, as its final term. And he had regard to it also as the *emanation* was *to* the creature, and as the *thing communicated* was *in* the creature, as its subject.

And God had regard to it in this manner, as he had a su-

It is used to signify *virtue*, or moral good. Job xxv. 5. Eccl. viii 1. Isa v. 29. and xxiv 23. and lxii 1. Ezek xxviii 7, 17. Dan. ii 31. 1 John i 5, &c.

And it is abundantly used to signify comfort, joy, and *happiness*. Esth viii. 16. Job xviii 8. and xxii 28. and xxix 3. and xxx 26 Psal. xxvii 1 and xcvii. 11. and cxviii. 27. and cxii. 4 Isa xliii. 16 and l. 10. and lix. 9. Jer. xiii. 16. Lam. iii. Ezek. xxxii. 8. Amos v. 18. Mic. 7, 8. 9, &c.

preme regard to himself, and value for his own infinite, internal glory. It was this value for himself that caused him to value and seek that his internal glory should *flow forth* from himself. It was from his value for his glorious perfections of wisdom, righteousness, &c. that he valued the proper *exercise* and effect of these perfections, in wise and righteous acts and effects. It was from his infinite value for his internal glory and fulness, that he valued the *thing itself* communicated, which is something of the same, extant in the creature. Thus because he infinitely values his own glory, consisting in the knowledge of himself, love to himself, and complacence and joy in himself; he therefore valued the image, communication, or participation of these in the creature. And it is because he values himself, that he delights in the knowledge, and love, and joy of the creature; as being himself the object of this knowledge, love, and complacence. For it is the necessary consequence of true esteem and love, that we value others' esteem of the same object, and dislike the contrary. For the same reason, God approves of others' esteem and love of himself.

Thus it is easy to conceive, how God should seek the good of the creature, consisting in the creature's knowledge and holiness, and even his happiness, from a supreme regard to *himself;* as his happiness arises from that which is an image and participation of God's own beauty: and consists in the creature's exercising a supreme regard to God, and complacence in him; in beholding God's glory, in esteeming and loving it, and rejoicing in it, and in his exercising and testifying love and supreme respect to God: which is the same thing with the creature's exalting God as his chief good, and making him his supreme end.

And though the emanation of God's fulness, intended in the creation, is to the creature as its *object*; and though the creature is the *subject* of the fulness communicated, which is the creature's good; yet it does not necessarily follow, that even in so doing, God did not make *himself* his end. It comes to the same thing. God's respect to the creature's good, and his respect to himself, is not a divided respect; but both are united in one, as the happiness of the creature aimed at is happiness in union with himself. The creature is no further happy with this happiness which God makes his ultimate end, than he becomes one with God. The more happiness the greater union; when the happiness is perfect, the union is perfect. And as the happiness will be increasing to eternity, the union will become more and more strict and perfect; nearer and more like to that between God the Father and the Son; who are so united that their interest is perfectly one.— If the happiness of the creature be considered in the whole of the creature's eternal duration, with all the infinity of its pro-

gress, and infinite increase of nearness and union to God; in this view, the creature must be looked upon as united to God in an infinite strictness.

If God has respect to something in the creature, which he views as of everlasting duration, and as rising higher and higher through that infinite duration, and that not with constantly diminishing (but perhaps an increasing) celerity; then he has respect to it, as, in the whole, of infinite height; though there never will be any particular time when it can be be said already to have come to such a height.

Let the most perfect union with God be represented by something at an infinite height above us: and the eternally increasing union of the saints with God, by something that is ascending constantly towards that infinite height, moving upwards with a given velocity; and that is to continue thus to move to all eternity. God who views the whole of this eternally increasing height, views it as an infinite height. And if he has respect to it, and makes it his end, as in the whole of it, he has respect to it as an infinite height, though the time will never come when it can be said it has already arrived at this infinite height.

God aims at that which the motion or progression which he causes, aims at, or tends to. If there be many things supposed to be so made and appointed, that by a constant and eternal motion, they all tend to a certain centre; then it appears that he who made them, and is the cause of their motion, aimed at that centre; that term of their motion, to which they eternally tend, and are eternally, as it were, striving after.—And if God be the centre, then God aimed at himself. And herein it appears, that as he is the first author of their being and motion, so he is the last end, the final term to which is their ultimate tendency and aim.

We may judge of the end that the Creator aimed at, in the being, nature, and tendency he gives the creature, by the mark or term which they constantly aim at in their tendency and eternal progress; though the time will never come, when it can be said it is attained to, in the most absolutely perfect manner.

But if strictness of union to God be viewed as thus infinitely exalted; then the creature must be regarded as nearly and closely united to God. And viewed thus, their interest must be viewed as one with God's interest; and so is not regarded properly with a disjunct and separate, but an undivided respect. And as to any difficulty of reconciling God's not making the creature his ultimate end, with a respect properly distinct from a respect to himself; with his benevolence and free grace, and the creature's obligation to gratitude, the rea-

der must be referred to chap. I. sect. 4. obj. 4. where this objection has been considered and answered at large.

If by reason of the strictness of the union of a man and his family, their interest may be looked upon as one, how much more so is the interest of Christ and his church,—whose first union in heaven is unspeakably more perfect and exalted, than that of an earthly father and his family--if they be considered with regard to their eternal and increasing union? Doubtless it may justly be esteemed so much one, that it may be sought, not with a distinct and separate, but an undivided respect. It is certain that what God aimed at in the creation of the world, was the good that would be the consequence of the creation, in the whole continuance of the thing created.

It is no solid objection against God aiming at an infinitely perfect union of the creature with himself, that the particular time will never come when it can be said, the union is now infinitely perfect. God aims at satisfying justice in the eternal damnation of sinners: which will be satisfied by their damnation, considered no otherwise than with regard to its eternal duration. But yet there never will come that particular moment when it can be said, that now justice is satisfied. But if this does not satisfy our modern free-thinkers, who do not like the talk about satisfying justice with an infinite punishment; I suppose it will not be denied by any, that God, in glorifying the saints in heaven with eternal felicity, aims to satisfy his infinite grace or benevolence, by the bestowment of a good infinitely valuable, because eternal: and yet there never will come the moment when it can be said, that *now* this infinitely valuable good has been actually bestowed.*

* Our author has produced from the purest principles of reason, and the fountain of revealed truth, abundant evidence, that God's ultimate and chief *end* in the creation of the universe, in the operations of Providence, and in the methods of salvation, is his *own glory*. But we do not think it superfluous to add a few observations on this important subject.

1. A clear and comprehensive view of the universe, or what our author calls "the world," will lead us to observe two grand divisions, which may be termed physical and moral. And though in both the glory of God is the chief end, yet this end is not attained by the same means in the moral as in the physical department.

2. By the creation and disposal of the physical part of the universe, the *glory* of God's natural perfections, as of sovereign wisdom, power, and goodness, is chiefly displayed. But by the creation and government of the moral part, the *glory* of the moral perfections of Deity, that is, of infinite moral rectitude, or equity, and of sovereign benevolence and mercy, is made to appear.

3. God being an infinite sovereign, controlled by no consideration but infinite rectitude, or a regard to the consistency of his own character; and a created universe being capable of two forms, and it should seem, for aught that appears to the contrary, of two only, physical and moral; a full emanation and display *ad extra* of the moral perfections of Deity could not be made without a moral system in all its capabilities of relation.

4. The physical part of the universe, even including the physical operations of intelligent beings, may subsist, it is evident, without requiring any other dis-

play of *glory* than what is included in sovereign wisdom, power, and goodness; and it is equally plain, that there would be no opportunity of manifesting strict equity, much less mercy, to existent beings, without a moral system. Therefore,

5. *If* strict or absolute equity, and sovereign mercy, be manifested, a moral system was *necessary*. To exercise strict, unmixed, or absolute equity, whereby is given to its object what is *due* to it (a capacity for moral agency being supposed) and yet to preserve that object, that is, a moral agent, from being liable to sin, involves a contradiction. For it is the same as to say, a free agent is not free to sin, though fully permitted to follow his own tendencies. And this is the same thing as to say, an accountable creature is not liable to fail; in other words, a moral agent is no moral agent, and a moral system is no moral system. Man would be impeccable and the very existence of sin impossible.

6. If it be asked, might not the whole of the moral part of the universe have been preserved from sin? We reply, undoubtedly it might; *if* sovereign benevolence had thought proper to interpose, in order to counteract the exercise of strict, unmixed, and absolute rectitude or equity; but then it must have been at the expence of *eternally concealing* the *glory* of this divine perfection, --*absolute rectitude*.

7. To permit the creature to sin, and to exercise absolute equity, is the same thing; in other words, to exercise this glorious perfection, and not to permit the creature to sin, are incompatible ideas. *If* this perfection be exercised, there is, there can be, no principle belonging to a moral system, which preserves it from being liable to sin. Nor is there any principle belonging to it independent of sovereign benevolence, which is adequate to preserve that liability to sin from actual defection. But to appeal, in the way of objection to the alternative of sovereign benevolence, which alone can preserve from sin, is the same as to concede what the proposition asserts.

8. Equity, in one view of it, is indeed compatible with the exercise of sovereign benevolence towards the same object, and at the same time. To question this, would be to question God's proper sovereignty, and therefore his right of creating and preserving the universe, and of beatifying any creatures he hath made. For neither of these effects could take place but by sovereign benevolence as a cause. But if sovereign benevolence were not compatible with justice, or equity, in one view of it, God could not be benevolent without being unjust, which is absurd.

9. Yet equity, in another view, stands as a contrast to benevolence. Strict or absolute equity, is that which excludes all sovereign, benevolent influence; and when moral agents are its object, (their being and natural capacities, or their moral capabilities, being supposed) the exercise of absolute equity must necessarily exclude benevolent, sovereign influence. Thus among men we find some resemblance of this abstract but momentous truth. In one view, justice and generosity are compatible; while one deals justly with another, he may also be additionally generous. But in another view, these are incompatible; for strict, absolute justice, is the same as justice and nothing more, and therefore must exclude generosity.

10. Therefore, equity, in the one view, implies the exclusion of injustice; and in the other, the exclusion of undeserved favour, or sovereign benevolent influence. The exercise of rectitude in the former sense, might have been without the permission of sin; but not so in the latter sense. If perfect absolute rectitude towards a moral system be made to emanate *ad extra*, to the full developement of the capabilities of such a system, the permission of sin is not only equitable, but even *metaphysically* necessary. That is, it involves a contradiction to say, that such a divine perfection may be so displayed, or its glory made to appear *ad extra*, and yet not to permit the existence of moral defect, or in other words, to actually hinder its existence.

11. The very idea of a moral system, in which the permission of defect is excluded by equity, is one of the most absurd that can be conceived. For it is the same as to say that God was bound in equity not to permit sin, while at the same time he constituted the agent free, and accountable for the exercise of his freedom; and as he has in fact permitted the introduction of sin into the world, such an idea would be the same as to charge infinite perfection with want of equity.

12. We may therefore safely conclude, that the glory of the divine rectitude, towards the intelligent and moral part of the universe, considered as accountable, and to the full extent of its moral capabilities, could not be manifested without

the permission of sin. The full exercise of equity must necessarily leave the moral system to its own tendencies and operations.

13. To permit the event of sin, or not to hinder it, implies, that the cause of defection is not in the permitter, but in the permitted; not in the governor, but the governed. There is in the moral part of the universe a cause why an event which ought not to take place, will take place, *if* not hindered. *If* there be no such cause in the system, how could the event take place on permission? If it be said, There is a chance it may not take place, and there is a chance of the contrary—it is but fair to ask, is this chance something which has a cause, or has it no cause? If the latter; the concession itself reduces chance to a mere nothingi For a contingent event, as the operation of chance is supposed to be, without any cause, is a metaphysical impossibility. If the former; what is the cause of what the objector calls chance? Is it something external, or internal? What is its nature and character? To say that liberty of indifference, or a self-determining power, is the chance which requires no preceding cause to produce the event, is to contradict absolute demonstration, if ever there was a metaphysical demonstration of any subject; as our author has abundantly shewn in his "Essay on the Freedom of the Will."

14 It is therefore inaccurate and unintelligible language to say, that either chance, liberty of indifference, or a self-determining power, independent of any antecedent cause, is adequate to account for the event of sin, or a deterioration of a moral system. God, therefore, permitting, there is an inherent adequate cause of failure, distinct from divine causation. What this cause is, and what is its nature, has been shewn and proved in a former note.

15. Permission is an act of equity; or, it is the exercise of rectitude, to the exclusion of benevolent influence; whether we regard that influence as preventing the event of sin, or as delivering from its power. Sovereign benevolence prevents the fall of angels; and it delivers, restores, and eternally saves a goodly number of the human fallen race. Without the permission of sin, restoring benevolence, or the exercise of mercy, would have been impossible; and consequently the *glory* of that perfection, which can be fully displayed only by its exercise towards the miserable, would have been eternally concealed.

16. *If*, therefore, *equity* be a glorious attribute of God, its emanation and exercise must be glorious. But the exercise of equity, in the strict sense, includes the permission of sin, as before proved.—And, here we may add, if not to hinder be an exercise of strict rectitude, the continued existence of sin is not inconsistent with it.

17. It will be allowed by every one, that, as *mercy* itself is a *glorious* attribute, so is the exercise of it a glorious thing. But this would have been impossible, *if* sin had no existence; nor could sin have had existence, *if* not permitted to exist; and sin could not have been permitted, *if* strict equity had not been exercised; nor could strict equity have been exercised, *if* the exercise of preventing sovereign benevolence had not been excluded, in those instances wherein moral defect actually took place.

COROLLARIES.

18. The ultimate and chief *end* of God in the creation and government of the moral part of the universe, is the *glory* of his moral perfections; which are virtually included in strict rectitude and sovereign benevolence.

19. *If* strict rectitude be exercised towards the degenerate part of the system, the restoration of those who are the objects of it is not possible; that is, to suppose it possible involves a contradiction. Therefore,

20. *If* any degenerate moral agent be restored, it must necessarily be by the exercise of that sovereign benevolence which we call mercy.

21. "Behold therefore the *goodness* and *severity* of God! on them who fell, severity; but toward thee goodness, if thou continue in his goodness; otherwise thou also shalt be cut off." Goodness and severity are but other words for sovereign *benevolence* and strict *equity*, the *glory* of which is abundantly conspicuous in the various divine dispensations towards the children of men, even in this life; but will appear still more transcendent in the day when God shall judge the world in righteousness, and in the day of *eternity*.—W.

A

DISSERTATION

CONCERNING THE

NATURE OF TRUE VIRTUE.

THE

NATURE OF TRUE VIRTUE.

CHAP. I.

Shewing wherein the Essence of true Virtue consists.

Whatever controversies and variety of opinions there are about the *nature* of virtue, yet all excepting some sceptics, who deny any real difference between virtue and vice, mean by it something *beautiful*, or rather some kind of *beauty* or excellency. It is not *all* beauty that is called virtue; for instance, not the beauty of a building, of a flower, or of the rainbow; but some beauty belonging to beings that have *perception* and *will*. It is not all beauty of *mankind* that is called virtue; for instance, not the external beauty of the countenance or shape, gracefulness of motion, or harmony of voice: but it is a beauty that has its original seat in the mind. But yet perhaps not *every* thing that may be called a beauty of *mind*, is properly called virtue. There is a beauty of understanding and speculation; there is something in the ideas and conceptions of great philosophers and statesmen, that may be called beautiful: which is a different thing from what is most commonly meant by virtue.

But virtue is the beauty of those qualities and acts of the mind that are of a *moral* nature, *i. e.* such as are attended with desert or worthiness of *praise* or *blame*. Things of this sort it is generally agreed, so far as I know, do not belong merely to speculation: but to the *disposition* and *will*, or (to use a general word I suppose commonly well understood) to the *heart*. Therefore I suppose I shall not depart from the common opinion when I say, that virtue is the beauty of the qualities and exercises of the heart, or those actions which pro-

ceed from them. So that when it is enquired, what is the nature of true *virtue?* This is the same as to enquire what that is, which renders any habit, disposition, or exercise of the heart truly *beautiful?*

I use the phrase *true* virtue, and speak of things *truly* beautiful, because I suppose it will generally be allowed, that there is a distinction to be made between some things which are *truly* virtuous, and others which only *seem* to be so, through a partial and imperfect view of things: that some actions and dispositions appear beautiful, if considered partially and superficially, or with regard to some things belonging to them, and in some of their circumstances and tendencies, which would appear otherwise in a more extensive and comprehensive view, wherein they are seen clearly in their whole nature, and the extent of their connections in the universality of things.

There is a general and particular beauty. By a *particular* beauty, I mean that by which a thing appears beautiful when considered only with regard to its connection with, and tendency to, some particular things within a limited, and as it were a private sphere. And a *general* beauty is that by which a thing appears beautiful when viewed most perfectly, comprehensively and universally, with regard to all its tendencies, and its connections with every thing to which it stands related. The former may be without and against the latter. As a few notes in a tune, taken only by themselves and in their relation to one another, may be harmonious, which, when considered with respect to all the notes in the tune, or the entire series of sounds they are connected with, may be very discordant, and disagreeable. *That only*, therefore, is what I mean by *true* virtue, which, belonging to the *heart* of an intelligent being, is beautiful by a *general* beauty, or beautiful in a comprehensive view, as it is in itself, and as related to every thing with which it stands connected. And therefore, when we are enquiring concerning the nature of true virtue—wherein this true and general beauty of the heart does most essentially consist—this is my answer to the enquiry:—

True virtue most essentially consists in BENEVOLENCE TO BEING IN GENERAL. Or perhaps, to speak more accurately, it is that consent, propensity and union of heart to being in general, which is immediately exercised in a general good will.

The things before observed respecting the nature of true virtue, naturally lead us to such a notion of it. If it has its seat in the heart, and is the general goodness and beauty of the disposition and its exercise, in the most comprehensive view, considered with regard to its universal tendency, and as related to every thing with which it stands connected; what can it consist in, but a consent and good will to being in general?

Beauty does not consist in discord and dissent, but in consent and agreement. And if every intelligent being is some way related to being in general, and is a part of the universal system of existence; and so stands in connection with the whole; what can its general and true beauty be, but its union and consent with the great whole?

If any such thing can be supposed as an union of heart to some particular being, or number of beings, disposing it to benevolence to a private circle or system of beings, which are but a small part of the whole; not implying a tendency to an union with the great system, and not at all inconsistent with enmity towards being in general; this I suppose not to be of the nature of true virtue; although it may in some respects be good, and may appear beautiful in a confined and contracted view of things.—But of this more afterwards.

It is abundantly plain by the holy scriptures, and generally allowed, not only by christian divines, but by the more considerable Deists, that virtue most essentially consists in love. And I suppose it is owned by the most considerable writers, to consist in general love of benevolence, or kind affection: though it seems to me the meaning of some in this affair is not sufficiently explained; which perhaps occasions some error or confusion in discourses on this subject.

When I say true virtue consists in *love to being in general*, I shall not be likely to be understood, that no one act of the mind or exercise of love is of the nature of true virtue, but what has being in general, or the great system of universal existence, for its *direct* and *immediate* object: so that no exercise of love, or kind affection to any one particular being, that is but a small part of this whole, has any thing of the nature of true virtue. But that the nature of true virtue consists in a *disposition* to benevolence towards being in general; though from such a disposition may arise exercises of love to *particular* beings, as objects are presented and occasions arise. No wonder that he who is of a *generally* benevolent disposition, should be more disposed than another to have his heart moved with benevolent affection to *particular* persons, with whom he is acquainted and conversant, and from whom arise the greatest and most frequent *occasions* for exciting his benevolent temper. But my meaning is, that no affections towards particular persons or beings are of the nature of true virtue, but such as arise from a generally benevolent temper, or from that habit or frame of mind, wherein consists a disposition to love being in general.

And perhaps it is needless for me to give notice to my readers, that when I speak of an intelligent being having a heart united and benevolently disposed to being in general, I thereby mean *intelligent* being in general. Not inanimate things, or

beings that have no perception or will; which are not properly capable objects of benevolence.

Love is commonly distinguished into love of benevolence, and love of complacence. Love of *benevolence* is that affection or propensity of the heart to any being, which causes it to incline to its well-being, or disposes it to desire and take pleasure in its happiness. And if I mistake not, it is agreeable to the common opinion, that beauty in the object is not always the ground of this propensity; but that there may be a disposition to the welfare of those that are *not* considered as beautiful, unless mere existence be accounted a beauty. And benevolence or goodness in the divine Being is generally supposed, not only to be prior to the beauty of many of its objects, but to their existence; so as to be the ground both of their existence and their beauty, rather than the foundation of God's benevolence; as it is supposed that it is God's goodness which moved him to give them both being and beauty. So that if all virtue primarily consists in that affection of heart to being, which is exercised in benevolence, or an inclination to its good, then God's virtue is so extended as to include a propensity not only to being actually existing, and actually beautiful, but to possible being, so as to incline him to give a being beauty and happiness.

What is commonly called love of *complacence*, presupposes beauty. For it is no other than delight in beauty; or complacence in the person or being beloved for his beauty. If virtue be the beauty of an intelligent being, and virtue consists in love, then it is a plain inconsistence, to suppose that virtue primarily consists in any love to its object for its beauty; either in a love of complacence, which is delight in a being for his beauty, or in a love of benevolence, that has the beauty of its object for its foundation. For that would be to suppose, that the beauty of intelligent beings primarily consists in love to beauty; or that their virtue first of all consists in their love to virtue. Which is an inconsistence, and going in a circle. Because it makes virtue, or beauty of mind, the foundation or first motive of that love wherein virtue originally consists, or wherein the very first virtue consists; or, it supposes the first virtue to be the consequence and effect of virtue. Which makes the first virtue both the ground and the consequence, both cause and effect of itself. Doubtless virtue primarily consists in something else besides any effect or consequence of virtue. If virtue consists primarily in love to virtue, then virtue, the thing loved, is the love of virtue: so that virtue must consist in the love of the love of virtue—and so on *in infinitum*. For there is no end of going back in a circle. We never come to any beginning or foundation; it is without beginning, and hangs on nothing.—Therefore, if the

essence of *virtue*, or *beauty* of mind, lies in love, or a disposition to love, it must primarily consist in something *different* both from complacence, which is a delight in beauty, and also from any benevolence that has the beauty of its object for its foundation. Because it is absurd to say, that virtue is primarily and first of all the consequence of itself; which makes virtue primarily prior to itself.

Nor can virtue primarily consist in *gratitude;* or one being's benevolence to another for his benevolence to him. Because this implies the same inconsistence. For it supposes a benevolence prior to gratitude, which is the cause of gratitude. The *first* benevolence cannot be gratitude. Therefore there is room left for no other conclusion, than that the primary object of virtuous love is being, simply considered; or that true virtue primarily consists, not in love to any particular beings, because of their virtue or beauty, nor in gratitude, because they love us; but in a propensity and union of heart to being simply considered; exciting *absolute* benevolence, if I may so call it, to being in general. I say true virtue *primarily* consists in this. For I am far from asserting, that there is no true virtue in any other love than this absolute benevolence. But I would express what appears to me to be the truth on this subject, in the following particulars.

The *first* object of a virtuous benevolence is *being*, simply considered; and if being, *simply* considered, be its object, then being *in general* is its object; and what it has an ultimate propensity to is the *highest good* of being in general. And it will seek the good of every *individual* being unless it be conceived as not consistent with the highest good of being in general. In which case the good of a particular being, or some beings, may be given up for the sake of the highest good of being in general. And particularly, if there be any being statedly and irreclaimably opposite, and an enemy to being in general, then consent and adherence to being in general will induce the truly virtuous heart to forsake that enemy, and to oppose it.

Further, if BEING, simply considered, be the first object of a truly virtuous benevolence, then that object who has *most* of being, or has the greatest share of existence, *other things being equal*, so far as such a being is exhibited to our faculties, will have the *greatest* share of the propensity and benevolent affections of the heart. I say, "other things being equal," especially because there is a *secondary* object of virtuous benevolence, that I shall take notice of presently, which must be considered as the ground or motive to a purely virtuous benevolence. Pure benevolence in its *first* exercise is nothing else but being's uniting consent, or propensity to being; and inclining to the general highest good, and to each being, whose

welfare is consistent with the highest general good, in proportion to the degree of *existence*,* understand, "other things being equal."

The *second* object of a virtuous propensity of heart is *benevolent* being. A secondary ground of pure benevolence is virtuous benevolence itself in its object. When any one under the influence of general benevolence, sees another being possessed of the like general benevolence, this attaches his heart to him, and draws forth greater love to him, than merely his having existence: because so far as the being beloved has love to being in general, so far his own being is, as it were, enlarged; extends to, and in some sort comprehends being in general: and therefore, he that is governed by love to being in general, must of necessity have complacence in him, and the greater degree of benevolence to him, as it were out of gratitude to him for his love to general existence, that his own heart is extended and united to, and so looks on its interest as its own. It is because his heart is thus united to being in general, that he looks on a benevolent propensity to being in general, wherever he sees it, as the beauty of the being in whom it is; an excellency that renders him worthy of esteem, complacence, and the greater good-will. But several things may be noted more particularly concerning this *secondary* ground of a truly virtuous love.

1. That loving a being on *this ground* necessarily arises from pure benevolence to being *in general*, and comes to the same thing. For he that has a simple and pure good will to general existence, must love that temper in others, that agrees and conspires with itself. A spirit of consent to being must agree with consent to being. That which truly and sincerely seeks the good of others, must approve of, and love that which joins with him in seeking the good of others.

2. This secondary ground of virtuous love is the thing wherein true moral or spiritual *beauty* primarily consists. Yea, spiritual beauty consists wholly in this, and in the various qualities and exercises of mind which proceed from it, and the external actions which proceed from these internal qualities and exercises. And in these things consists all true *virtue*, viz. in this love of being, and the qualities and acts which arise from it.

* I say, "in proportion to the degree of *existence*," because one being may have more *existence* than another, as he may be greater than another. That which is *great* has more existence, and is further from nothing, than that which is *little*. One being may have every thing positive belonging to it, or every thing which goes to its positive existence (in opposition to defect) in an higher degree than another; or a greater capacity and power, greater understanding, every faculty and every positive quality in an higher degree. An *archangel* must be supposed to have more existence, and to be every way further removed from *nonentity*, than a worm.

3. As all spiritual beauty lies in these virtuous principles and acts, so it is primarily *on this account* they are beautiful, viz. that they imply *consent* and *union* with being *in general*. This is the primary and most essential beauty of every thing that can justly be called by the name of virtue, or is any moral excellency in the eye of one that has a perfect view of things. I say, "the *primary* and *most essential* beauty," because there is a secondary and inferior sort of beauty; which I shall take notice of afterwards.

4. This spiritual beauty, which is but a *secondary* ground of virtuous benevolence, is the ground not only of benevolence, but *complacence*, and is the *primary* ground of the latter; that is, when the complacence is truly virtuous. Love to us in particular, and kindness received may be a secondary ground: but this is the primary objective foundation of it.

5. It must be noted, that the *degree* of the *amiableness* of true virtue primarily consisting in consent, and a benevolent propensity of heart to being in general, is not in the *simple* proportion of the degree of benevolent affection seen, but in a proportion *compounded* of the greatness of the benevolent being, or the degree of *being* and the degree of *benevolence*.—One that loves being in general, will necessarily value good will to being in general, wherever he sees it. But if he sees the same benevolence in *two* beings, he will value it *more* in two, than in one only. Because it is a greater thing, more favourable to being in general, to have two beings to favour it, than only one of them. For there is more being that favours being: both together having more being than one alone. So if one being be as great as two, has as much existence as both together, and has the same degree of general benevolence, it is more favourable to being in general, than if there were general benevolence in a being that had but half that share of existence. As a large quantity of gold, with the same quality, is more valuable than a small quantity of the same metal.

6. It is impossible that any one should truly *relish* this beauty, consisting in general benevolence, who has *not* that temper himself. I have observed, that if any being is possessed of such a temper, he will unavoidably be pleased with the same temper in another. And it may in like manner be demonstrated, that it is such a spirit, and nothing else, which will relish such a spirit. For if a being destitute of benevolence, should love benevolence to being in general, it would prize and seek that for which it had no value. For how should one love and value a *disposition* to a thing, or a *tendency* to *promote* it, and for that very reason, when the *thing* itself is what he

is regardless of, and has no value for, nor desires to have promoted.*

* In this masterly Dissertation on the *nature* of virtue, our author enters at once on his *own* definition of the term, and explains very clearly what *he means* by *true* virtue. His views, in some respects, are considerably different from those which are most current among ethical writers; and probably for want of some explanations, whereby the different definitions adopted by others may be accounted for, his invaluable treatise has not only been underrated, but even, by some, unreasonably opposed. We shall here offer a few remarks, which perhaps may tend to cast some light on the subject in general, as well as to relieve our author's definition from unfair imputations.

1. Virtue, if we regard the use of the term (ἀρετὴ) among the Greeks, seems to have been appropriated as much to the idea of martial *courage*, as the English term is appropriated to that of female *chastity*. Not that it was used *exclusively* in the former case, any more than in the latter. It often signifies power, energy, efficacy, and excellence. But by moral writers, both ancient and modern, it has been unanimously adopted to represent a very general moral idea. It would be easy to produce a great number of definitions from moralists and divines; but this is neither necessary, nor does it comport with our present purpose.

2. If we mistake not, there is no just definition of virtue, which is not reducible to this general one: VIRTUE IS A LAUDABLE MEAN OF REAL HAPPINESS. Cicero, indeed, says of it, that it is "affectio animi constans conveniensque, laudabiles efficiens eos, in quibus est, et *ipsa per se, sua sponte, separata etiam utilitate laudabilis.*" (Tuscul. Quæst. Lib. iv. § 15.) But virtue being *laudable* from its very nature, independently of any advantageous result, does not hinder it from being "a laudable *mean* of real happiness."

3. Now happiness being the uniform and voluntary *end* of intellectual existence, a *desire* of it being inseparable from our nature; we become liable to err, not only by adopting *wrong means* for accomplishing the end we propose to ourselves, but also by forming a false estimate of the nature of happiness, or the *end itself*. If the happiness be not real but imaginary, in the contemplation of the agent, however well adapted the means may be in order to attain it, they deserve not the epithet *virtuous*.

4. To discover the nature of true happiness, the light of wisdom is requisite; and while desire is blind, false estimates will be made. But every one thinks himself wise and prudent enough to prescribe his *own happiness*, till such folly be shewn him by the wisdom which is from above; and he who supposes himself adequate to fix the *end*, cannot be very diffident about the *means* to be employed.

5. Hence there is room for as many representations of virtue, as there are *kinds* of happiness which men think to be *real;* in addition to as many *means* employed to accomplish their proposed end, as they judge to be *laudable*.

6. From these preliminary remarks it appears, that the *nature* and real *character* of virtue must arise from the nature of the *end proposed*, and of the *means employed* for securing it. We shall now attempt to illustrate the ground of numerous representations of virtue, by comparison.

7. Let the different *kinds of happiness* which we propose to ourselves, whether those which have been classified by moral writers, or any others, be represented by so many *concentric circles*. For instance, let happiness be considered as *personal* and *relative*, *private* and *public*, *domestic* and *national*, *temporal* and *eternal*, or the like; and for every species of happiness let there be a corresponding circle drawn. Let the filling up of that circle express the *virtue* requisite to attain the happiness thus represented.

8. Suppose, for example, that *health*, *friendship*, *domestic unanimity*, *national prosperity*, the *welfare* of the *human race*, and our individual *conformity to God* in his moral excellence through eternal ages, or the *happiness* implied in these respectively, be represented by the concentric circles above-mentioned. Then the happiness implied in *health*, a small circle, will be filled by corresponding *virtues*, when the end is sought by *laudable* means; such as temperance, moderation, chastity, government of the passions, &c. The circle representing the happiness implied in *friendship* will be filled by corresponding *virtues*, when the end is sought, as before, by *laudable* means; such as benevolence, fidelity, prudence, sympathy,

CHAP. II.

Shewing how that love, wherein true virtue consists, respects the divine Being and created things.

From what has been said, it is evident, that true virtue must chiefly consist in LOVE TO GOD; the Being of beings,

&c. The circle of *domestic* happiness is filled by the virtues of kindness, meekness, patience, industry, economy, &c. That of *national prosperity* by diligence in business, honesty, justice, truth, liberality, conscientious submission, fortitude, real patriotism, &c. The circle representing the *welfare* of the *human race*, as the common offspring of one progenitor, and who are regarded by the Supreme Parent as the children of one family, is filled by the virtues of philanthropy, expansive benevolent zeal, self-denial, public spirit, passive courage, &c. And the circle of that happiness which is implied in our individual *conformity to God's moral excellence;* in other words, that happiness which is *ultimate* and *supreme*, is filled by nothing short of *supreme love to God*, or, in language more philosophically accurate, *consent of will to* BEING *in general—benevolent attachment to universal* BEING.

9. Now who can question whether temperance, fidelity, meekness, honesty and liberality, philanthropy and public spirit, should be ranked among the virtues? And who can doubt that they are calculated to secure the happiness implied in health, friendship, national prosperity, and the welfare of the human race, respectively? And yet, if we exclude the *disposition* which is required to fill the *largest* circle—*benevolent attachment to universal being*—which if those virtues may not an *atheist* actually possess? Nay, may not an atheist possess them *all?* For may he not promote his *health* by temperance, moderation, chastity, and the like? May he not exercise *friendly* benevolence, fidelity, prudence, sympathy, and similar virtues? Have not atheists been great *patriots*, if by patriotism we mean a supreme regard for the prosperity and glory of the nation to which they belonged, manifested by severe studies, by the lightning and thunder of their eloquence, the fatigues of war, and a willingness to shed the last drop of their blood in defence of their country? Nay more, may not an atheist possess the virtues of generous philanthropy, and, to a certain extent, of benevolent zeal for the welfare of mankind in general, expressed by an attempt to remove their ignominious chains, to promote the civilization of savage nations whom he has never seen, to alleviate the sufferings, and to enhance the comforts of all mankind?

10. Far be it from us to suppose that atheists are *favourable* to virtue, even in these inferior acceptations of the term. The reverse is abundantly evident. But this is what we assert, that such virtues as those above-mentioned, when *exclusive* of what our author contends for, are what an atheist *may possess* without inconsistency; and that they have no *moral* worth, no *direct* connection either with the complacency of God in them, or with the ultimate happiness of the agent. However attentive a man may be to practise virtues in subservience to his health, while he repels those of friendship; or however observant of the virtues of friendship, while he repels others which are conducive to domestic, national, and universal happiness; his virtues, if the name be retained, are those of a *bad character*. Some have been conspicuous and zealous patriots, while determined foes to philanthropy and general good will to mankind as such. And how many have fought with the most patriotic zeal and courage in the field of honour, though tyrants at home, and in private life trampling on those virtues which constitute a good husband, a good father, a good master, a good neighbour, a good friend, or a good *any thing*. In short, were a man to "give all his goods to feed the poor, and his body to be burned," out of zeal to promote some public good, yet without *love to God*, without benevolent attachment to *universal being*, he is *morally nothing*, or worse than nothing.

11. What are called *virtues*, without a disposition to embrace *universal being* and *excellence*, are morally considered, but lifeless images. To compare them to

infinitely the greatest and best. This appears, whether we consider the primary or secondary ground of virtuous love.

a series of decimal figures, which, however increased, will never amount to an unit of moral worth, is to place them in too favourable a view; they are more like ciphers. But let these unmeaning ciphers be preceded by a figure, let these images have an informing and invigorating principle, let these dry bones have the spirit of life in them, and they will acquire a moral excellence; they will deserve the name of REAL VIRTUES.

12. Some have defined virtue by calling it, "a tendency to ultimate happiness." If the meaning of this definition be, "a tendency to God, in whom our ultimate happiness is found," it may be admitted; otherwise it seems not admissible on many accounts. Tendency may be considered as either *voluntary* or *involuntary*. In the first place let us suppose it to be *voluntary*. We then observe, that it is not *rational*, nor even compatible with common sense, to say that virtue is a voluntary tendency to a *quality of our own minds*, as happiness evidently is. For happiness, from its very nature, is a relative state or quality of mind, which is the result of enjoying an object suited to our wants. And to desire ultimate happiness without including the *object* of choice from whence happiness results, is the same as to seek happiness in *nothing*. If it be said that *happiness itself* is the object sought; then virtue consists in a voluntary tendency to seek happiness in happiness, which is absurd.

13. Ultimate happiness has been defined, "the durable possession of perfect good." If this be a just statement, which few or none will question, what is the *perfect good* possessed? If it be answered, The Supreme Being; to this there is no objection. But if it be said, the ultimate happiness *itself* is the perfect good enjoyed; then the happiness to which the choice is directed is both cause and effect at the same time Both the *thing enjoyed* and the *enjoyment* itself are the same thing. Which is no less absurd than for a man to assert, that the stock of a tree and the fruit on its branches, are the same thing; or that his *relish* of food is the same as the *food itself*. A tendency to happiness resulting from *no object* of that tendency, is the same thing as a tendency to *no happiness*. In other words, according to this definition, supposing the tendency to be *voluntary*, virtue is a *desire* of ultimate happiness. And this will reduce it to another absurdity; for, as a desire of ultimate happiness is an inseparable property of intelligent beings, the *most vicious* being in existence is *virtuous*. These consequences, however just, will not be thought very extraordinary, when compared with the following declarations. "The following seems to be at present the true moral state of the world: In *every* moral agent the number of virtuous actions greatly exceed that of vicious ones.—In by far the greater number of moral agents, and even amongst those who are considered as most vicious and profligate, the number of virtuous affections and habits greatly preponderates over the vicious ones. A character in which there is a preponderance of vice, is very rarely, if ever, to be met with." (BELSHAM's Elements, p. 400.) And, to advance one step further in this hopeful way, as this *desire* belongs to *all* intelligent beings *alike*, all intelligent beings are *alike virtuous!*

14. In reality, a *mere desire* of ultimate happiness is *no virtue*, has nothing *laudable* in it, but is a mere instinct of intellectual nature, and belongs alike to the best and the worst of intelligent beings. But virtue consists in the *choice* of, or a *disposition* to choose, *laudable means* in order to arrive at this end. A *bad* man in his choice of objects, or *a vicious choice* itself, aims at ultimate happiness; but the *means* are *not laudable*, and this *wrong choice of means* constitutes the very essence of his *vice*.

15. If it be said that virtue is a tendency to ultimate *self-enjoyment*, as constituting happiness; then it follows that *self* is the *perfect good* desired And then every one is *himself* all-sufficient to constitute his own happiness. Let any rational person judge; whether this be not a definition of *sordid vice*, rather than of virtue; and whether such a disposition would not be a tendency to insubordination, anarchy, and confusion, rather than to happiness—the very temper of an apostate spirit.

16. If it be said moreover, that "a *tendency* to ultimate happiness," does not refer to the will, desire, or choice; but expresses *any thing* which *in fact* tends to ultimate happiness. This leads us to suppose secondly, that the tendency is *involuntary*. It seems then, on this supposition, that the *means* employed to ac-

It was observed that the *first* objective ground of that love wherein true virtue consists, is BEING simply considered: and, as a necessary consequence of this, that being who has the greatest share of universal existence has proportionably the greatest share of virtuous benevolence, so far as such a being is exhibited to the faculties of our minds, other things being equal. But God has infinitely the greatest share of existence. So that all other being, even the whole universe, is as nothing in comparison of the divine Being.

And if we consider the *secondary* ground of love, or moral excellency, the same thing will appear. For as God is infinitely the greatest Being, so he is allowed to be infinitely the most beautiful and excellent: and all the beauty to be found throughout the whole creation, is but the reflection of the diffused beams of that Being who hath an infinite fulness of brightness and glory. God's beauty is infinitely more valuable than that of all other beings upon both those accounts mentioned, *viz.* the degree of his virtue and the *greatness* of his being, possessed of this virtue. And God has sufficiently exhibited himself, both in his being, and his infinite greatness and excellency: and has given us faculties, whereby we are capable of plainly discovering his immense superiority to all other beings in these respects. Therefore he that has true virtue, consisting in benevolence to *being* in general, and in benevolence to *virtuous* being, must necessarily have a supreme love to God, both of benevolence and complacence. And all true virtue must radically and essentially, and as it were summarily consist in this. Because God is not only infinitely greater and more excellent than all other being, but he is the head of the universal system of existence; the foundation and fountain of all being and all beauty; from whom all is perfectly derived, and on whom all is most absolutely and perfectly dependent; *of whom*, and *through whom*, and *to whom*

quire ultimate happiness need not be *laudable*. This is the *genuine result* of that account of virtue which is here animadverted upon; and which the abettors of it are forced to admit. The doctrine of "intrinsic merit or demerit of actions independent on their consequences," they call an "absurd supposition." (BELSHAM's Elements, p. 309, 372, 373.)

17. It seems then we are all bound to be *virtuous* at our peril, and yet we must wait the *result* of *all* our actions, before we can know what is virtuous and what is not. For if virtue and vice have no intrinsic character of good or evil, but actions, affections, habits, or characters, are either good or bad from their ultimate *consequences;* then we must wait for those *consequences*, as the only expositors of virtue and vice.

18. Can any thing more be necessary, in order to shew the absurdity of such a notion of virtue? Happiness it is allowed, is a *consequent*, of which virtue is the *antecedent*. But what is the *moral nature* of this antecedent? Is it any thing good, beautiful, or laudable *per se?* No, say they: it has no nature beside tendency; which has no intrinsic merit or demerit; and consequently, that which has no moral nature is a *moral nothing;* that is, virtue is a moral nothing, or *nothing moral*. And whether this character of virtue be not totally distant from the dictates of right reason, philosophic accuracy, common sense, and christian piety, let the reader judge.—W.

is all being and all perfection; and whose being and beauty are, as it were, the sum and comprehension of all existence and excellence: much more than the sun is the fountain and summary comprehension of all the light and brightness of the day.

If it should be objected, that virtue consists primarily in benevolence, but that our fellow-creatures, and not God, seem to be the most proper objects of our benevolence; inasmuch as *our goodness extendeth not to God*, and *we cannot be profitable to him*.—To this I answer,

1. A benevolent propensity of heart is exercised, not only in *seeking to promote* the happiness of the being towards whom it is exercised, but also in *rejoicing in* his happiness. Even as gratitude for benefits received will not only excite endeavours to requite the kindness we receive, by equally benefiting our benefactor, but also if he be above any need of us, or we have nothing to bestow, and are unable to repay his kindness, it will dispose us to rejoice in his prosperity.

2. Though we are not able to give any thing to God, which we have of our own independently; yet we may be the instruments of promoting *his glory*, in which he takes a true and proper *delight*.*—Whatever influence such an objection may seem to have on the minds of some, yet is there any that owns the being of a God, who will deny that any benevolent affection is due to God, and proper to be exercised towards him? If no *benevolence* is to be exercised towards God, because we cannot profit him, then for the same reason, neither is *gratitude* to be exercised towards him for his benefits to us: because we cannot requite him. But where is the man who believes a God and a providence, that will say this?

There seems to be an inconsistence in some writers on morality, in this respect, that they do not wholly exclude a regard to the *Deity* out of their schemes of morality, but yet mention it so slightly, that they leave me room and reason to suspect they esteem it a less important and a subordinate part of true morality: and insist on benevolence to the *created system*, in such a manner as would naturally lead one to suppose they look upon that as by far the most important and essential thing in their scheme. But why should this be? If true virtue consists partly in a respect to God, then doubtless it consists *chiefly* in it. If true morality requires that we should have some regard, some benevolent affection to our Creator, as well as to his creatures, then doubtless it requires the first regard to be paid to him; and that he be every way the supreme object of our benevolence. If his being above our reach, and beyond all capa-

* As was shewn at large in the former treatise, on God's end in creating the world, Chap. I. sect. 4. whither I must refer the reader for a more full answer to this objection.

city of being profited by us, does not hinder but that nevertheless he is the proper object of our love, then it does not hinder that he should be loved according to his *dignity*, or according to the degree in which he has those things wherein worthiness of regard consists, so far as we are capable of it. But this worthiness, none will deny, consists in these two things, *greatness* and moral *goodness*. And those that own a God, do not deny that he infinitely exceeds all other beings in these. If the Deity is to be looked upon as within that system of beings which properly terminates our benevolence, or belonging to that whole, certainly he is to be regarded as the *head* of the system, and the *chief* part of it; if it be proper to call him a *part*, who is infinitely more than all the rest, and in comparison of whom, and without whom all the rest are nothing, either as to beauty or existence. And therefore certainly, unless we will be Atheists, we must allow that true virtue does primarily and most essentially consist in a supreme love to God; and that where this is wanting, there can be no true virtue.

But this being a matter of the highest importance, I shall say something further to make it plain that love to God is most essential to true virtue; and that no benevolence whatsoever to other beings can be of the nature of true virtue without it.

And therefore, let it be supposed that some beings, by natural instinct or by some other means, have a determination of mind to union and benevolence to a *particular person*, or *private system*,* which is but a small part of the universal system of being: and that this disposition or determination of mind is independent on, or not subordinate to benevolence to *being in general*. Such a determination, disposition, or affection of mind is not of the nature of true virtue.

This is allowed by all with regard to *self-love;* in which good will is confined to one single person only. And there are the same reasons why any other private affection or good will, though extending to a society of persons independent of, and unsubordinate to, benevolence to the universality, should not be esteemed truly virtuous. For notwithstanding it extends to a number of persons, which taken together are more than a single person, yet the whole falls infinitely short of the universali-

* It may be here noted, that when hereafter I use such a phrase as *private system* of being, or others similar, I thereby intend any system or society of beings that contains but a small part of the great system, comprehending the universality of existence. I think *that* may well be called a *private system*, which is but an infinitely small part of this great whole we stand related to. I therefore also call that affection *private affection*, which is limited to so narrow a circle: and that *general* affection or benevolence, which has *being in general* for its object.

ty of existence; and if put in the scales with it, has no greater proportion to it than a single person.

However, it may not be amiss more particularly to consider the reasons why *private affections*, or good will limited to a particular circle of beings, falling infinitely short of the whole existence, and not dependent upon it, nor subordinate to general benevolence, cannot be of the nature of true virtue.

1. Such a private affection, detached from general benevolence, and independent on it, as the case may be, will be *against* general benevolence, or of a contrary tendency; and will set a person *against* general existence, and make him an enemy to it. As it is with *selfishness*, or when a man is governed by a regard to his own private interest; independent of regard to the public good, such a temper exposes a man to act the part of an enemy to the public. As in every case wherein his private interest seems to clash with the public; or in all those cases wherein such things are presented to his view, that suit his personal appetites or private inclinations, but are inconsistent with the good of the public. On which account a selfish, contracted, narrow spirit is generally abhorred, and is esteemed base and sordid. But if a man's affection takes in half a dozen more, and his regards extend so far beyond his own single person as to take in his children and family; or if it reaches further still to a larger circle, but falls infinitely short of the universal system, and is exclusive of being in general; his private affection exposes him to the same thing, *viz.* to pursue the interest of its particular object in *opposition* to general existence: which is certainly contrary to the tendency of true virtue; yea directly contrary to the main and most essential thing in its nature, the thing on account of which chiefly its nature and tendency is good. For the chief and most essential good that is in virtue, is its favouring being in general. Now certainly, if private affection to a limited system had in itself the essential nature of virtue, it would be impossible that it should in any circumstance whatsoever, have a tendency and inclination directly *contrary* to that wherein the essence of virtue chiefly consists.

2. Private affection, if not subordinate to general affection, is not only liable, as the case *may* be, to issue in enmity to being in general, but has a *tendency* to it as the case certainly *is*, and must necessarily be. For he that is influenced by private affection, not subordinate to a regard to being in general, sets up its particular or limited object *above* being in general; and this most naturally tends to enmity against the latter, which is by right the great supreme, ruling, and absolutely sovereign object of our regard. Even as the setting up another prince as supreme in any kingdom, distinct from the lawful sovereign, naturally tends to enmity against the lawful

sovereign. Wherever it is sufficiently published, that the supreme, infinite, and all-comprehending Being requires a supreme regard to himself; and insists upon it, that our respect to him should universally rule in our hearts, and every other affection be subordinate to it, and this under the pain of his displeasure, (as we must suppose it is in the world of intelligent creatures, if God maintains a moral kingdom in the world) then a consciousness of our having chosen and set up another prince to rule over us, and subjected our hearts to him, and continuing in such an act, must unavoidably excite enmity, and fix us in a stated opposition to the supreme Being. This demonstrates, that affection to a private society or system, independent on general benevolence, cannot be of the nature of true virtue. For this would be absurd, that it has the nature and essence of true virtue, and yet at the same time has a *tendency opposite* to true virtue.

3. Not only would affection to a private system, unsubordinate to a regard to being in general, have a tendency to oppose the supreme object of virtuous affection, as its effect and consequence, but would become *itself* an opposition to that object. Considered by itself in its nature, detached from its effects, it is an instance of great opposition to the rightful supreme object of our respect. For it exalts its private object above the other great and infinite object; and sets that up as supreme in opposition to this. It puts down being in general, which is infinitely superior in itself and infinitely more important, in an inferior place; yea, subjects the supreme general object to this private infinitely inferior object: which is to treat it with great contempt, and truly to act in opposition to it, and to act in opposition to the true order of things, and in opposition to that which is infinitely the supreme interest; making this supreme and infinitely important interest, as far as in us lies, to be subject to, and dependent on an interest infinitely inferior. This is to act the part of an enemy to it. He that takes a subject and exalts him above his prince, sets him as supreme instead of the prince, and treats his prince wholly as a subject, therein acts the part of an enemy to his prince.

From these things I think it is manifest, that no affection limited to any private system, not dependent on, nor subordinate to being in general, can be of the nature of true virtue; and this, whatever the private system be, let it be more or less extensive, consisting of a greater or smaller number of individuals, so long as it contains an infinitely little part of universal existence, and so bears no proportion to the great all-comprehending system. And consequently, that no affection whatsoever to any creature, or any system of created beings, which is not dependent on, nor subordinate to a proper

sity or union of the heart to God, the supreme and infinite Being can be of the nature of true virtue.

From hence also it it evident, that the *divine virtue*, or the virtue of the divine mind, must consist primarily in *love to himself*, or in the mutual love and friendship which subsists eternally and necessarily between the several persons in the Godhead, or that infinitely strong propensity there is in these divine persons one to another. There is no need of multiplying words to prove that it must be thus, on a supposition that virtue, in its most essential nature, consists in benevolent affection or propensity of heart towards being in general; and so flowing out to particular beings in a greater or lesser degree, according to the measure of existence and beauty which they are possessed of. It will also follow from the foregoing things, that God's goodness and love to created beings is derived from, and subordinate to his love to himself.*

With respect to the manner in which a virtuous love in *created* beings, *one to another*, is dependent on, and derived from love to *God*, this will appear by a proper consideration of what has been said; that it is sufficient to render love to any created being virtuous, if it arise from the temper of mind wherein consists a *disposition* to love God supremely.—Because it appears from what has been already observed, all that love to *particular beings*, which is the fruit of a benevolent propensity of heart to *being in general*, is virtuous love.—But, as has been remarked, a benevolent propensity of heart to being in general, and a temper or disposition to love God supremely, are in effect the same thing. Therefore, if love to a created being comes from that temper or propensity of the heart, it is virtuous. However, every particular exercise of love to a creature may not *sensibly* arise from any exercise of love to God, or an explicit consideration of any similitude, conformity, union or relation to God, in the creature beloved.

The most proper *evidence* of love to a created being arising from that temper of mind wherein consists a supreme propensity of heart to God, seems to be the agreeableness of the kind and degree of our love to *God's end* in our creation, and in the creation of all things, and the coincidence of the exercise of our love, in their manner, order, and measure, with the *manner* in which *God* himself exercises love to the creature in the creation and government of the world, and the way in which God, as the first cause and supreme disposer of all things, has respect to the creature's happiness in subordination to himself as his own supreme end. For the true virtue of created beings is doubtless their highest excellency, and their

* In what manner it is so, I have endeavoured in some measure to explain in the preceding discourse of *God's end in creating the world.*

true goodness, and that by which they are especially agreeable to the mind of their Creator. But the true goodness of a thing must be its agreeableness to its *end*, or its fitness to answer the design for which it was made. Therefore they are good moral agents, whose temper of mind or propensity of heart, is agreeable to the *end* for which God made moral agents. But as has been shewn, the last end for which God has made moral agents must be the last end for which God has made all things: it being evident, that the moral world is the end of the rest of the world; the inanimate and unintelligent world being made for the rational and moral world, as much as a house is prepared for the inhabitants.

By these things it appears, that a truly virtuous mind, being as it were under the sovereign dominion of *love to God*, above all things, seeks the *glory of God*, and makes this his supreme, governing, and ultimate end. This consists in the expression of God's perfections in their proper effects,—the manifestation of God's glory to created understandings,—the communications of the infinite fulness of God to the creature —the creature's highest esteem of God, love to, and joy in him—and in the proper exercises and expressions of these.— And so far as a virtuous mind exercises true virtue in *benevolence* to created beings, it chiefly seeks the *good* of the creature; consisting in its *knowledge* or view of God's glory and beauty, its *union* with God, conformity and love to him, and joy in him. And that disposition of heart, that consent, union, or propensity of mind to being in general, which appears chiefly in such exercises, is VIRTUE, truly so called; or in other words, true GRACE and real HOLINESS. And no other disposition or affection but this is of the nature of virtue.

Corollary. Hence it appears that those *schemes* of religion or moral philosophy, which—however well in some respects they may treat of benevolence to *mankind* and other virtues depending on it, yet—have not a supreme regard to God, and love to him laid as the *foundation*, and all other virtues handled in a *connection* with this, and in *subordination* to it, are not true schemes of philosophy, but are fundamentally and essentially defective. And whatever other benevolence or generosity towards mankind, and other virtues, or moral qualifications which go by that name, any are possessed of, that are not attended with a *love to God* which is altogether above them, and to which they are subordinate, and on which they are dependent, there is nothing of the nature of true virtue or religion in them. And it may be asserted in general, that nothing is of the nature of true virtue, in which God is not the *first* and the *last;* or which, with regard to their exercises in general, have not their first foundation and source in apprehensions of God's supreme dignity and glory, and in answerable esteem and love of him, and have not respect to God as the supreme end.

CHAP. III.

Concerning the secondary and inferior Kind of Beauty.

Though what has been spoken of is alone justly esteemed the true beauty of moral agents, or spiritual beings; this alone being what would appear beautiful in them upon a clear and comprehensive view of things; and therefore alone is the moral amiableness of beings that have understanding and will, in the eyes of him that perfectly sees all things as they are; yet there are other qualities, other sensations, propensities and affections of mind, and principles of action, that often obtain the epithet of *virtuous*, and by many are supposed to have the nature of true virtue, which are entirely of a distinct nature from this, and have nothing of that kind; and therefore are erroneously confounded with real virtue.

That consent, agreement, or union of being to being, which has been spoken of, *viz.* the union or propensity of *minds* to mental or spiritual existence, may be called the highest and primary beauty; being the proper and peculiar beauty of spiritual and moral beings, which are the highest and first part of the universal system, for whose sake all the rest has existence. Yet there is another, inferior, secondary beauty, which is some image of this, and which is not peculiar to spiritual beings, but is found even in inanimate things; which consists in a mutual consent and agreement of different things, in form, manner, quantity, and visible end or design; called by the various names of regularity, order, uniformity, symmetry, proportion, harmony, &c. Such is the mutual agreement of the various sides of a square, or equilateral triangle, or of a regular polygon. Such is, as it were, the mutual consent of the different parts of the periphery of a circle, or surface of a sphere, and of the corresponding parts of an ellipsis. Such is the agreement of the colours, figures, dimensions, and distances of the different spots on a chess board. Such is the beauty of the figures on a piece of chintz or brocade. Such is the beautiful proportion of the various parts of a human body or countenance. And such is the sweet mutual consent and agreement of the various notes of a melodious tune. This is the same that Mr. Hutchinson, in his Treatise on Beauty, expresses by uniformity in the midst of variety. Which is no other than the consent or agreement of different things in form, quantity, &c. He observes, that the greater the variety is in equal uniformity the greater the beauty. Which is no more than to say, the more there are of different mutually agreeing things, the greater is the beauty. And the reason of that is, because it is more

considerable to have many things consent one with another, than a few only.

The beauty which consists in the visible fitness of a thing to its use, and unity of design, is not a distinct sort of beauty from this. For it is to be observed, that one thing which contributes to the beauty of the agreement and proportion of various things, is their relation one to another; which connects them, and introduces them together into view and consideration, and whereby one suggests the other to the mind, and the mind is led to compare them, and so to expect and desire agreement. Thus the uniformity of two or more pillars, as they may happen to be found in *different* places, is not an equal degree of beauty, as that uniformity in so many pillars in the corresponding parts of the *same* building. So means and an intended effect are related one to another. The answerableness of a thing to its use is only the proportion and fitness of a cause or means to a visibly designed effect, and so an effect suggested to the mind by the idea of the means. This kind of beauty is not entirely different from that beauty which there is in fitting a mortice to its tenon. Only when the beauty consists in unity of design, or the adaptness of a variety of things to promote one intended effect, in which all conspire, as the various parts of an ingenious complicated machine, there is a *double* beauty, as there is a twofold agreement and conformity. First, there is the agreement of the various parts to the designed end. Secondly, through this designed end or effect, all the various particulars agree one with another as the general medium of their union, whereby they, being united in this third, are all united one to another.

The reason, or at least one reason, why God has made this kind of mutual agreement of things beautiful and grateful to those intelligent beings that perceive it, probably is, that there is in it some image of the true, spiritual, original beauty which has been spoken of; consisting in being's consent to being, or the union of spiritual beings in a mutual propensity and affection of heart. The other is an image of this, because by that uniformity diverse things become as it were one, as it is in this cordial union. And it pleases God to observe analogy in his works, as is manifest in fact in innumerable instances; and especially to establish inferior things with analogy to superior. Thus, in how many instances has he formed brutes in analogy to the nature of mankind? and plants in analogy to animals, with respect to the manner of their generation, nutrition, &c. And so he has constituted the external world in analogy to the spiritual world in numberless instances; as might be shewn, if it were necessary, and here were a proper place for it.—Why such analogy in God's works pleased him, it is not needful now to inquire. It is sufficient

that he makes an agreement of different things, in their form, manner, measure, &c. to appear beautiful, because here is some image of an higher kind of agreement and consent of spiritual beings. It has pleased him to establish a law of nature, by virtue of which the uniformity and mutual correspondence of a beautiful plant, and the respect which the various parts of a regular building seem to have one to another, and their agreement and union, and the consent or concord of the various notes of a melodious tune, should appear beautiful; because therein is some image of the consent of mind, of the different members of a society or system of intelligent beings, sweetly united in a benevolent agreement of heart.

And here by the way I would further observe, probably it is with regard to this image or resemblance which secondary beauty has of true spiritual beauty, that God has so constituted nature, that the presenting of this inferior beauty, especially in those kinds of it which have the greatest resemblance of the primary beauty, as the harmony of sounds and the beauties of nature, have a tendency to assist those whose hearts are under the influence of a truly virtuous temper to dispose them to the exercises of divine love, and enliven in them a sense of spiritual beauty.

From what has been said we may see that there are two sorts of agreement or consent of one thing to another. (1.) There is a *cordial* agreement; that consists in concord and union of mind and heart: which, if not attended (viewing things in general) with more discord than concord, is true virtue, and the original or primary beauty, which is the only true *moral* beauty. (2.) There is a *natural* union or agreement; which, though some image of the other, is entirely a distinct thing; the will, disposition, or affection of the heart having no concern in it, but consisting only in uniformity and consent of nature, form, quantity, &c. (as before described,) wherein lies an inferior secondary sort of beauty, which may in distinction from the other, be called *natural* beauty. This may be sufficient to let the reader know how I shall hereafter use the phrase *cordial* and *natural* agreement; and moral, spiritual, divine, and *primary* original beauty, and *secondary* or natural beauty. Concerning this latter, the inferior kind of beauty, the following things may be observed:

1. The *cause* why secondary beauty is grateful to men, is only a *law of nature* which God has fixed, or an *instinct* he has given to mankind; and not their perception of the same thing which *God* is pleased to regard as the ground or rule by which he has established such a law of nature. This appears in two things.

(1.) That which God respects, as the *ground* of this law of nature whereby things having a secondary beauty are

made grateful to men, is their mutual *agreement* and proportion, in measure, form, &c. But in many instances, persons that are gratified and affected with this beauty, do not reflect on that particular agreement and proportion which, according to the law of nature, is the ground and rule of beauty in the case, yea, are ignorant of it. Thus a man may be pleased with the harmony of the notes in a tune, and yet know nothing of that proportion or adjustment of the notes, which by the law of nature is the ground of the melody. He knows not, that the vibrations in one note regularly coincide with the vibrations in another; that the vibrations of a note coincide in time with two vibrations of its octave; and that two vibrations of a note coincide with three of its fifth, &c.—Yea, he may not know that there are vibrations of the air in the case, or any corresponding motions in the organs of hearing, in the auditory nerve, or animal spirits.—So a man may be affected and pleased with a beautiful proportion of the features in a face, and yet not know what that proportion is, or in what measures, quantities, and distances it consists. In this, therefore, a sensation of *secondary* beauty differs from a sensation of *primary* and spiritual beauty, consisting in a spiritual union and agreement. What makes the *latter* grateful, is perceiving the *union itself.* It is the immediate view of that wherein the beauty fundamentally lies, that is pleasing to the virtuous mind.

(2.) God, in establishing such a law—that mutual natural agreement of different things, in form, quantity, &c. should appear beautiful or grateful to men—seems to have had regard to the *resemblance* there is in such a natural agreement, to that spiritual, cordial agreement, wherein original beauty consists. But it is not any reflection upon, or perception of, such a resemblance, that is the reason why such a form or state of objects appear beautiful to men: but their sensation of pleasure, on a view of this secondary beauty, is immediately owing to the law God has established, or the instinct he has given.

2. Another thing observable concerning this kind of beauty, is that it affects the mind more (other things being equal,) when taken notice of in objects which are of considerable *importance*, than in little trivial matters. Thus the symmetry of the parts of a human body or countenance, affects the mind more than the beauty of a flower. So the beauty of the solar system, more than as great and as manifold an order and uniformity in a tree. And the proportions of the parts of a church, or a palace, more than the same proportions in some little slight compositions, made to please children.

3. Not only uniformity and proportion, &c. of different things is requisite, in order to this inferior beauty; but also some *relation* or connection of the things thus agreeing one

with another. As the uniformity or likeness of a number of pillars scattered hither and thither, does not constitute beauty, or at least by no means in an equal degree, as uniformity in pillars connected in the same building, in parts that have *relation* one to another. So if we see things unlike and very disproportioned, in *distant* places, which have no relation to each other, this excites no such idea of deformity, as disagreement, inequality, or disproportion in things related and connected; and the nearer the relation, and the stricter the connection, so much the greater and more disgustful is the deformity, consisting in their disagreement.

4. This secondary kind of beauty, consisting in uniformity and proportion, not only takes place in material and external things, but also in things immaterial; and is, in very many things, plain and sensible in the latter, as well as the former. And when it is so, there is no reason why it should not be grateful to them that behold it, in these as well as the other, by virtue of the same sense, or the same determination of mind, to be gratified with uniformity and proportion. If uniformity and proportion be the things that affect and appear agreeable to this sense of beauty, then why should not uniformity and proportion affect the same sense in immaterial things as well as material, if there be equal capacity of discerning it in both? and indeed *more* in spiritual things (*cæteris paribus*) as these are more important than things merely external and material?

This is not only reasonable to be supposed, but is evident in fact, in numberless instances. There is a beauty of order in society, besides what consists in benevolence, or can be referred to it, which is of the *secondary* kind. As, when the different members of society have all their appointed office, place and station, according to their several capacities and talents, and every one keeps his place, and continues in his proper business. In this there is a beauty, not of a different kind from the regularity of a beautiful building, or piece of skilful architecture, where the strong pillars are set in their proper place, the pilasters in a place fit for them, the square pieces of marble in the pavement, the pannels, partitions, and cornices, &c. in places proper for them. As the agreement of a variety of things in one common design,—as of the parts of a building, or complicated machine,—is one instance of that regularity which belongs to the secondary kind of beauty, so there is the same kind of beauty in what is called *wisdom*, consisting in the united tendency of thoughts, ideas and particular volitions, to one general purpose: which is a distinct thing from the *goodness* of that general purpose, as being useful and benevolent.

There is a beauty in the virtue called *justice*, which consists in the agreement of different things, that have relation to one another, in nature, manner, and measure; and therefore is the very same sort of beauty with that uniformity and proportion, which is observable in those external and material things that are esteemed beautiful. There is a natural agreement and adaptedness of things that have relation one to another, and an harmonious corresponding of one thing with another. He who from his will *does* evil to others, should *receive* evil from the will of him or them whose business it is to take care of the injured, and to act in their behalf, in *proportion* to the evil of his doings. Things are in natural regularity and mutual agreement, in a literal sense, when he whose heart opposes the general system, should have the hearts of that system, or the heart of the ruler of the system, against him; and, in consequence should receive evil, in proportion to the evil tendency of the opposition of his heart. So there is an agreement in nature and measure, when he that loves has the proper returns of love; when he that from his heart promotes the good of another has his good promoted by the other; for there is a kind of justice in becoming gratitude.

Indeed most of the duties incumbent on us, if well considered, will be found to partake of the nature of *justice*.—There is some natural agreement of one thing to another; some adaptedness of the agent to the object; some answerableness of the act to the occasion; some equality and proportion in things of a similar nature, and of a direct relation one to another. So it is in relative duties; duties of children to parents, and of parents to children; duties of husbands and wives; duties of rulers and subjects; duties of friendship and good neighbourhood; and all duties that we owe to God, our Creator, preserver, and benefactor; and all duties whatsoever, considered as required by God, and as what are to be performed with a regard to Christ.

It is this secondary kind of beauty which Mr. Wollaston seems to have had in his eye when he resolved all virtue into an agreement of inclinations, volitions and actions with *truth*. He evidently has respect to the *justice* there is in virtues and duties; which consists in one being expressing such affections, and using such a conduct towards another, as hath a natural agreement and proportion to what is in them, and what we receive from them; which is as much a natural conformity of affection and action with its ground, object, and occasion, as that which is between a true proposition and the thing spoken of in it.

But there is another and higher beauty in true virtue, and in all truly virtuous dispositions and exercises, than what consists in any uniformity or similarity of various things; viz. the

union of heart to *being in general*, or to GOD, the being of beings, which appears in those virtues; and of which those virtues, when true, are the various expressions or effects. Benevolence to being in general, or to being simply considered, is entirely a distinct thing from uniformity in the midst of variety, and is a superior kind of beauty.

It is true, that benevolence to being in general will naturally incline to justice, or proportion in the exercises of it.—He that loves being, simply considered, will naturally, other things being equal, love *particular* beings in a proportion compounded of the degree of being, and the degree of virtue, or benevolence to being, which they have. And that is to love beings in proportion to their dignity. For the dignity of any being consists in those two things. Respect to being, in this proportion, is the first and most general kind of justice: which will produce all the subordinate kinds. So that, after benevolence to being in general exists, the *proportion* which is observed in objects may be the cause of the *proportion of benevolence* to those objects; but *no proportion* is the *cause* or ground of the existence of such a thing as benevolence to being.—The tendency of objects to excite that degree of benevolence which is proportionable to the degree of being, &c. is the *consequence* of the existence of benevolence, and not the *ground* of it. Even as a tendency of bodies, one to another, by mutual attraction, in proportion to the quantity of matter, is the consequence of the being of such a thing as mutual attraction; and not attraction the effect of proportion.

By this it appears, that *just* affections and acts have a *beauty* in them, distinct from and superior to the uniformity and equality there is in them: for which he that has a truly virtuous temper, relishes and delights in them. And that is the expression and manifestation there is in them of benevolence to being in general. And besides this, there is the agreement of *justice* to the will and command of God; and also something in the tendency and consequences of justice, agreeable to general benevolence, as the glory of God, and the general good. Which tendency also makes it beautiful to a truly virtuous mind. So that the tendency of general benevolence to produce justice, also the tendency of justice to produce effects agreeable to general benevolence, both render justice pleasing to a virtuous mind. And it is on these accounts *chiefly*, that justice is grateful to a virtuous taste, or a truly benevolent heart. But though it be true, that the uniformity and proportion there is in justice is grateful to a benevolent heart, as this uniformity and proportion tends to the general good; yet that is no argument that there is no *other* beauty in it but its agreeing with benevolence. For so the external regularity and order of the natural world gratifies benevolence, as it is profitable, and tends to the general good; but that is no argument that

there is no *other* sort of beauty in external uniformity and proportion, but only its suiting benevolence, by tending to the general good.

5. From all that has been observed concerning this *secondary* kind of beauty it appears, that the disposition which consists in a determination of mind to approve and be pleased with this beauty, considered simply and by itself, has nothing of the nature of true virtue, and is entirely a different thing from a truly virtuous taste. For it has been shewn, that this kind of *beauty* is entirely diverse from the beauty of true virtue, whether it takes place in material or immaterial things; and therefore it will follow, that a *taste* of this kind of beauty is entirely a different thing from a taste of true virtue. Who will affirm, that a disposition to approve of the harmony of good music, or the beauty of a square or equilateral triangle, is the same with true holiness, or a truly virtuous disposition of mind? It is a relish of *uniformity* and *proportion* that determines the mind to approve these things. And there is no need of any thing higher, or of any thing in any respect diverse, to determine the mind to approve and be pleased with equal *uniformity* and *proportion* among spiritual things which are equally discerned. It is virtuous to love true virtue, as that denotes an agreement of the heart with virtue. But it argues no virtue for the heart to be pleased with that which is entirely distinct from it.

Though it be true, that there is some *analogy* in it to spiritual and virtuous beauty——as far as material things can have analogy to things spiritual, of which they can have no more than a shadow—yet, as has been observed, men do not approve it *because* of any such analogy perceived. And not only reason but *experience* plainly shews, that men's approbation of this sort of beauty does not spring from any virtuous temper, and has no connection with virtue. For otherwise their delight in the beauty of squares, and cubes, and regular polygons, in the regularity of buildings, and the beautiful figures in a piece of embroidery, would increase in proportion to men's virtue; and would be raised to a great height in some eminently virtuous or holy men; but would be almost wholly lost in some others that are very vicious and lewd. It is evident in fact, that a relish of these things does not depend on general benevolence, or *any benevolence at all* to any being whatsoever, any more than a man's loving the taste of honey, or his being pleased with the smell of a rose. A taste of this *inferior* beauty in things immaterial, is one thing which has been taken by some moralists, for a true virtuous principle, supposed to be implanted naturally in the hearts of all mankind.

CHAP. IV.

Of Self-Love, and its various Influence, to cause Love to others, or the Contrary.

Many assert that all love arises from self-love. In order to determine this point, it should be clearly determined what is meant by self-love. Self-love, I think, is generally defined "a man's love of his own happiness;" which is short, and may be thought very plain: but in reality is an ambiguous definition, as the expression *his own*, is equivocal, and liable to be taken in two very different senses. For a man's *own happiness* may either be taken universally, for all the happiness or pleasure of which the mind is in any regard the subject, or whatever is grateful and pleasing to men: or it may be taken for the pleasure a man takes in his own proper, private, and separate good. And so *self-love* may be taken two ways:

1. It may be taken for the same as his loving whatsoever is pleasing to him. Which comes only to this, that self-love is a man's liking, and being suited and pleased in that which he likes, and which pleases him; or, that it is a man's loving what he loves. For whatever a man loves, that thing is grateful and pleasing to him, whether that be his own peculiar happiness, or the happiness of others. And if this be all that they mean by self-love, no wonder they suppose that all love may be resolved into self-love. For it is undoubtedly true, that whatever a man loves, his love may be resolved into his *loving what he loves.*—If by self-love is meant nothing else but a man's loving what is grateful or pleasing to him, and being averse to what is disagreeable, this is calling *that* self-love, which is only a general capacity of loving or hating; or a capacity of being either pleased or displeased; which is the same thing as a man's having a faculty of will. For if nothing could be either pleasing or displeasing, agreeable or disagreeable to a man, then he could incline to nothing, and will nothing. But if he is capable of having inclination, will and choice, then what he inclines to and chooses, is grateful to him, whatever that be; whether it be his own private good, the good of his neighbours, or the glory of God. And so far as it is grateful or pleasing to him, so far it is a part of his pleasure, good, or happiness.

But if this be what is meant by self-love, there is an impropriety and absurdity even in the putting of the question, Whether all our love, or our love to each particular object of our love, does not arise from self-love? For that would be the same as to enquire, Whether the reason why our love is fixed

on such and such particular objects, is not, that we have a capacity of loving some things? This may be a general reason why men love or hate any thing at all; and therein differ from stones and trees, which love nothing and hate nothing. But it can never be a reason why men's love is placed on such and such objects. That a man in general loves and is pleased with happiness, or has a capacity of enjoying happiness, cannot be the reason why such and such things become his happiness: as for instance, why the good of his neighbour, or the happiness and glory of God, is grateful and pleasing to him, and so becomes a part of his happiness.

Or if what they mean who say that all love comes from self-love, be not that our loving such and such particular persons and things arises from our love to happiness in general, but from a love to *our own happiness*, which consists in these objects; so, the reason why we love benevolence to our friends or neighbours is because we love our happiness, consisting in their happiness, which we take pleasure in:—still the notion is absurd. For here the effect is made the cause of that of which it is the effect: our happiness, consisting in the happiness of the person beloved, is made the cause of our love to that person. Whereas the truth plainly is, that our love to the person is the cause of our delighting, or being happy in his happiness. How comes our happiness to consist in the happiness of such as we love, but by our hearts being first united to them in affection, so that we as it were look on them as ourselves, and so on their happiness as our own? Men who have benevolence to others have pleasure when they see others' happiness, because seeing their happiness gratifies some inclination that was in their hearts before. They before inclined to their happiness; which was by benevolence or goodwill; and therefore, when they see their happiness, their inclination is suited, and they are pleased. But the being of inclinations and appetites is prior to any pleasure in gratifying these appetites.

2. Self-love, as the phrase is used in common speech, most commonly signifies a man's regard to his confined *private self*, or love to himself with respect to his *private interest*.

By *private* interest I mean that which most immediately consists in those pleasures, or pains, that are *personal*. For there is a comfort, and a grief, that some have in others' pleasures or pains; which are in *others* originally, but are derived to them, or in some measure become theirs, by virtue of a benevolent union of heart with others. And there are other pleasures and pains that are originally our *own*, and not what we have by such a participation with others. Which consist in perceptions agreeable or contrary to certain personal in-

clinations implanted in our nature; such as the sensitive appetites and aversions. Such also is the disposition or the determination of the mind to be pleased with external beauty, and with all inferior, secondary beauty, consisting in uniformity, proportion, &c. whether in things external or internal, and to dislike the contrary deformity. Such also is the natural disposition in men to be pleased in a perception of their being the objects of the honour and love of others, and displeased with others' hatred and contempt. For pleasures and uneasiness of this kind are doubtless as much owing to an immediate determination of the mind by a fixed law of our nature, as any of the pleasures or pains of external sense. And these pleasures are properly of the private and personal kind; being not by any participation of the happiness or sorrow of others, through benevolence. It is evidently mere self-love that appears in this disposition. It is easy to see that a man's love to himself will make him love *love* to himself, and hate *hatred* to himself. And as God has constituted our nature, self-love is exercised in no one disposition more than in this. Men probably are capable of much more pleasure and pain through this determination of the mind, than by any other personal inclination or aversion whatsoever. Though perhaps we do not so very often see instances of extreme suffering by this means as by some others, yet we often see evidences of men's dreading the contempt of others more than death; and by such instances may conceive something what men would suffer if universally hated and despised; and may reasonably infer something of the greatness of the misery that would arise under a sense of universal abhorrence, in a great view of intelligent being in general, or in a clear view of the Diety, as incomprehensibly and immensely great, so that all other beings are as nothing and vanity—together with a sense of his immediate continual presence, and an infinite concern with him and dependence upon him—and living constantly in the midst of most clear and strong evidences and manifestations of his hatred and contempt. These things may be sufficient to explain what I mean by *private* interest; in regard to which self-love, most properly so called, is immediately exercised.

And here I would observe, that if we take self-love in this sense, so love to some *others* may truly be the *effect* of self-love; *i. e.* according to the common method and order which is maintained in the laws of nature. For no created thing has power to produce an effect any otherwise than by virtue of the laws of nature. Thus that a man should love those who are of his party, and who are warmly engaged on his side, and promote his interest, is the natural consequence of a private self-love. Indeed there is no metaphysical neces-

sity in the nature of things, that because a man loves himself and regards his own interest, he therefore should love those that love him and promote his interest, i. e. to suppose it to be otherwise implies no contradiction. It will not follow from any absolute metaphysical necessity, that because bodies have solidity, cohesion, and gravitation towards the centre of the earth, therefore a weight suspended on the beam of a balance should have greater power to counterbalance a weight on the other side, when at a distance from the fulcrum, than when it is near. It implies no contradiction that it should be otherwise; but only as it contradicts that beautiful proportion and harmony, which the Author of Nature observes in the laws of nature he has established. Neither is there any absolute necessity, that because there is an internal mutual attraction of the parts of the earth, or any other sphere, whereby the whole becomes one solid coherent body, therefore other bodies that are around it should also be attracted by it, and those that are nearest be attracted most. But according to the order and proportion generally observed in the laws of nature, one of these effects is connected with the other, so that it is justly looked upon as the same power of attraction in the globe of the earth, which draws bodies about the earth towards its centre, with that which attracts the parts of the earth themselves one to another; only exerted under different circumstances.—By a like order of nature, a man's love to those that love him, is no more than a certain expression or effect of self-love.—No other principle is needful in order to the effect, if nothing intervenes to countervail the natural tendency of self-love.—Therefore there is no more true virtue in a man thus loving his friends merely from self-love, than there is in self-love itself, the principle from whence it proceeds. So a man being disposed to hate those that hate him, or to resent injuries done him, arises from self-love, in like manner as loving those that love us, and being thankful for kindness shewn us.

But it is said by some, that it is apparent there is some *other* principle concerned in exciting the passions of gratitude and anger besides self-love, *viz.* a *moral sense*, or sense of moral beauty and deformity, determining the minds of all mankind to approve of, and be pleased with virtue, and to disapprove of vice, and behold it with displicence; and that their seeing or supposing this moral beauty or deformity in the kindness of a benefactor, or opposition of an adversary, is the occasion of these affections of gratitude or anger. Otherwise, why are not these affections excited in us towards inanimate things that do us good or hurt? Why do not we experience gratitude to a garden, or fruitful field? And why are we not angry with a tempest, or blasting mildew, or an overflowing stream? We are very differently affected towards those that do us good

from the virtue of generosity, or hurt us from the vice of envy and malice, than towards things that hurt or help us, which are destitute of reason and will. Concerning this I would make several remarks.

1. Those who thus argue, that gratitude and anger cannot proceed from *self-love*, might argue in the same way, and with equal reason, that neither can these affections arise from love to *others:* which is contrary to their own scheme. They say that the reason why we are affected with gratitude and anger towards *men*, rather than *things* without life, is moral sense: which they say is the effect of that principle of benevolence or love to others, or love to the public, which is naturally in the hearts of all mankind. But now, I might say, according to their own way of arguing, gratitude and anger cannot arise from love to others, or love to the public, or any sense of mind that is the fruit of public affection. For how differently are we affected towards those that do good or hurt to the public from understanding and will, and public motive, from what we are towards such inanimate things as the sun and the clouds, that do good to the public by enlightening and enlivening beams and refreshing showers; or mildew, and an overflowing stream, that does hurt to the public by destroying the fruits of the earth? Yea, if such a kind of argument be good, it will prove that gratitude and anger cannot arise from the united influence of self-love and public love, or moral sense arising from public affection. For if so, why are we not affected towards inanimate things that are beneficial or injurious both to us and the public, in the same manner as to them that are profitable or hurtful to both on choice and design, and from benevolence or malice?

2. On the supposition, that men love those who love them, and are angry with those that hate them, from the natural influence of self-love; it is not at all strange that the Author of Nature, who observes order, uniformity, and harmony in establishing its laws, should so order, that it should be natural for self-love to cause the mind to be affected differently towards exceedingly different objects; and that it should cause our heart to extend itself in *one* manner towards inanimate things, which gratify self-love without sense or will, and in *another* manner towards beings which we look upon as having understanding and will, like ourselves, and exerting these faculties in our favour, and promoting our interest from love to us. No wonder, seeing we love ourselves, that it should be natural to us to extend something of that same kind of love which we have for ourselves, to them who are the same kind of beings as ourselves, and comply with the inclinations of our self-love, by expressing the same sort of love towards us.

3. If we should allow that to be universal, that in gratitude and anger there is the exercise of some kind of moral

sense—as it is granted there is something that may be so called—all the moral sense that is essential to those affections, is a sense of Desert; which is to be referred to that sense of *justice* before spoken of, consisting in an apprehension of that secondary kind of beauty that lies in uniformity and proportion; which solves all the difficulty in the objection. Others' love and kindness to us, or their ill-will and injuriousness, appear to us to *deserve* our love or our resentment. Or in other words, it seems to us no other than *just*, that as they love us and do us good, we also should love them and do them good. And so it seems *just*, that when others' hearts oppose us, and they from their hearts do us hurt, our hearts should oppose them, and that we should desire themselves may suffer in like manner as we have suffered, *i. e.* there appears to us to be a natural agreement, proportion, and adjustment between these things; which is indeed a kind of *moral sense*, or sense of beauty in moral things. But, as was before shewn, it is a moral sense of a *secondary* kind, and is entirely different from a sense or relish of the original essential beauty of true virtue; and may be without any principle of true virtue in the heart. Therefore, doubtless, it is a great *mistake* in any to suppose, that the moral sense which appears and is exercised in a sense of *desert*, is the same thing as a love of virtue, or a disposition and determination of mind to be pleased with true virtuous beauty, consisting in public benevolence. Which may be further confirmed if it be considered, that even with respect to a sense of *justice* or *desert*, consisting in uniformity, and agreement between others' actions towards us and our actions towards them, in a way of well-doing or of ill-doing, it is not absolutely necessary to the being of these passions of gratitude and anger, that there should be any notion of justice in them, in any public or general view of things: as will appear by what shall be next observed.

4. Those authors who hold that the moral sense which is natural to all mankind, consists in a natural relish of the beauty of virtue, and so arises from a principle of true virtue implanted by nature in the hearts of all, hold that true virtue consists in *public benevolence*. Therefore, if the affections of gratitude and anger necessarily imply such a moral sense as they suppose, then these affections imply some delight in the public good, and an aversion of the mind to public evil. And if so, then every time a man feels anger for opposition, or gratitude for any favour, there must be at least a supposition of a tendency to public injury in that opposition, and a tendency to public benefit in the favour that excites his gratitude. But how far is this from being true? For instance; a ship's crew enter into a conspiracy against the master, to murder him, and run away with the ship, and turn pirates: but before they bring their mat-

ters to ripeness for execution, one of them repents, and opens the whole design; whereupon the rest are apprehended and brought to justice. The crew are enraged with him that has betrayed them, and earnestly seek opportunity to *revenge* themselves upon him. And for an instance of *gratitude;* a gang of robbers that have long infested the neighbouring country, have a particular house whither they resort, and where they meet from time to time to divide their booty, and hold their consultations for carrying on their pernicious designs. The magistrates and officers of the country, after many fruitless endeavours to discover their secret place of resort, at length are well-informed where it is, and are prepared with sufficient force to surprise them, and seize them all at the place of rendezvous, at an hour appointed when they understand they will all be there. A little before the arrival of the appointed hour, while the officers with their bands are approaching, some person is so kind to these robbers, as to give them notice of their danger, so as just to give them opportunity to escape. They are *thankful* to him, and give him a handful of money for his kindness. Now in such instances I think it is plain, that there is no supposition of a *public injury* in that which is the occasion of their *anger*; yea, they know the contrary. Nor is there any supposition of *public good* in that which excites their *gratitude;* neither has public benevolence, or moral sense, consisting in a determination to approve of what is for the public good, any influence at all in the affair. And though there be some affection, besides a sense of uniformity and proportion, that has influence in such anger and gratitude, it is not *public* affection or benevolence, but *private* affection; yea, that affecton which is to the *highest degree* private, consisting in a man's love of his own person.

5. The passion of *anger*, in particular, seems to have been unluckily chosen as a medium to prove a sense and determination to delight in virtue, consisting in benevolence natural to all mankind. For if that moral sense which is exercised in anger, were that which arose from a benevolent temper of heart, being no other than a sense or relish of the beauty of benevolence, one would think a disposition to anger should *increase* at least in some proportion, as a man had more of a sweet, benign, and benevolent temper: which seems contrary to experience, which shews that the less men have of benevolence, and the more they have of a contrary temper, the more are they disposed to anger and deep resentment of injuries.

And though *gratitude* be that which many speak of as a certain noble principle of virtue, which God has implanted in the hearts of all mankind; and though it be true there is a gratitude that is *truly virtuous*: and the want of gratitude, or an ungrateful temper, is *truly vicious*, and argues an abomina-

ble depravity of heart; yet I think, what has been observed may serve to convince such as impartially consider it, not only that not all anger, or hating those which hate us, but also that not all gratitude, or loving those which love us, arises from a truly virtuous benevolence of heart.

Another sort of affections which may be properly referred to self-love as its source, and which might be expected to be the fruit of it, according to the general analogy of nature's laws, is that of affections to such as are near to us by the ties of nature. Such are those of whose beings we have been the occasion, in which we have a very peculiar propriety, and whose circumstances, even from the beginning of their existence, many ways lead them to a high esteem of us, and to treat us with great dependence, submission and compliance. These the constitution of the world makes to be united in interest, and accordingly to act as one, in innumerable affairs, with a communion in each other's affections, desires, cares, friendships, enmities, and pursuits. As to the opinion of those who ascribe the natural affection there is between parents and children to a particular *instinct* of nature, I shall take notice of it afterwards.

And as men may love persons and things from self-love, so may their love to *qualities* and *characters* arise from the same source. Some represent this, as though there were need of a great degree of metaphysical refining to make it out, that men approve of others from self-love, whom they hear of at a distance, or read of in history, or see represented on the stage, from whom they expect no profit or advantage. But perhaps it is not considered, that what we approve of in the first place is the *character;* and from the character we approve the *person.* And is it a strange thing, that men should from self-love like a temper or character, which in its nature and tendency falls in with the nature and tendency of self-love; and which we know by experience and self-evidence, without metaphysical refining, in the general tends to men's pleasure and benefit? And on the contrary, it is strange that any should dislike what they see tends to men's pain and misery? Is there need of a great degree of subtilty and abstraction to make it out, that a child, who has heard and seen much of what is calculated strongly to fix an idea of the pernicious, deadly nature of the rattlesnake, should have an aversion to that species from self-love; so as to have a degree of this aversion and disgust excited by seeing even the picture of that animal? And that from the same self-love it should be pleased with a lively representation of some pleasant fruit of which it has often tasted the sweetness? Or with the image of some bird, which it has always been told is innocent, and with whose pleasent singing it has often been entertained?

Yet the child neither fears being bitten by the picture of the snake, nor expects to eat of the painted fruit, or to hear the figure of the bird sing. I suppose none will think it difficult to allow, that such an approbation or disgust of a child may be accounted for from its natural delight in the pleasure, of *taste* and *hearing*, and its aversion to *pain* and *death*, through *self-love*, together with the habitual connection of these agreeable or terrible ideas with the form and qualities of these objects, the ideas of which are impressed on the mind of the child by their images.

And where is the difficulty of allowing, that a person may hate the general character of a spiteful and malicious man, for the like reason as he hates the general nature of a serpent; knowing from reason, instruction and experience, that malice in men is pernicious to mankind, as well as spite or poison in a serpent? And if a man may from *self-love* disapprove the vices of malice, envy, and others of that sort, which naturally tend to the *hurt* of mankind, why may he not from the same principle approve the contrary virtues of meekness, peaceableness, benevolence, charity, generosity, justice, and the social virtues in general; which he as easily and clearly knows, naturally tend to the good of mankind?—It is undoubtedly true, that some have a love to these virtues from a *higher* principle. But yet I think it as certainly true, that there is generally in mankind a sort of approbation of them, which arises from *self-love*.

Besides what has been already said, the same thing further appears from this; that men commonly are most affected towards, and most highly approve, those virtues which agree with their *interest* most, according to their various conditions in life. We see that persons of low condition are especially enamoured with a condescending, accessible, affable temper in the great; not only in those whose condescension has been exercised towards themselves; but they will be peculiarly taken with such a character when they have accounts of it from others, or when they meet with it in history, or even in romance. The poor will most highly approve and commend liberality. The weaker sex, who especially need assistance and protection, will peculiarly esteem and applaud fortitude and generosity in those of the other sex, of whom they read or hear, or which they have represented to them on a stage.

I think it plain from what has been observed, that as men may approve and be disposed to commend a benevolent temper from *self-love;* so the higher the degree of benevolence is, the more may they approve of it. This will account for some kind of approbation, from this principle, even of love to enemies, *viz.* as a man loving his enemies is an evidence of a high degree of benevolence of temper: the degree of

it appearing from the obstacles it overcomes. And it may be here observed, that the consideration of the tendency and influence of *self-love* may shew, how men in general may approve of *justice* from another ground, besides that approbation of the secondary beauty there is in uniformity and proportion, which is natural to all. Men, from their infancy, see the necessity of it, not only that it is necessary for others or for human society; but they find the necessity of it for themselves, in instances that continually occur; which tends to prejudice them in its favour, and to fix an habitual approbation of it from self-love.

Again, that forementioned approbation of justice and desert, arising from a sense of the beauty of natural agreement and proportion, will have a kind of reflex, and indirect influence to cause men to approve benevolence, and disapprove malice; as men see that he who hates and injures others deserves to be hated and punished, and that he who is benevolent, and loves others and does them good, deserves himself also to be loved and rewarded by others, as they see the natural congruity or agreement, and mutual adaptness of these things. And having always seen this, malevolence becomes habitually connected in the mind with the idea of being hated and punished, which is disagreeable to self-love; and the idea of benevolence is habitually connected and associated with the idea of being loved and rewarded by others, which is grateful to self-love. And by virtue of this association of ideas, benevolence itself becomes grateful, and the contrary displeasing.

Some vices may become in a degree odious by the influence of self-love, through an habitual connection of ideas of contempt with it; contempt being what self-love abhors. So it may often be with drunkenness, gluttony, sottishness, cowardice, sloth, niggardliness. The idea of contempt becomes associated with the idea of such vices, both because we are used to observe that these things are commonly objects of contempt, and also find that they excite contempt in ourselves. Some of them appear marks of littleness, *i. e.* of small abilities, and weakness of mind, and insufficiency for any considerable effects among mankind. By others, men's influence is contracted into a narrow sphere, and by such means persons become of less importance, and more insignificant. And things of little importance are naturally little accounted of. And some of these ill qualities are such as mankind find it their interest to treat with contempt, as they are very hurtful to human society.—There are no particular moral virtues whatsoever, but what in some or other of these ways, and most of them in several, come to have some kind of approbation from *self-love*, without the influence of a truly virtuous principle: nor

any particular vices, but what, by the same means, meet with some disapprobation.

This kind of approbation and dislike, through the joint influence of *self-love* and *association* of ideas, is in many vastly heightened by *education*. This is the means of a strong, close, and almost irrefragable association, in innumerable instances of ideas, which have no connection any other way than by education; and is the means of greatly strengthening that association or connection which persons are led into by other means: as any one would be convinced, perhaps more effectually than in most other ways, if they had opportunity of any considerable acquaintance with American savages and their children.

CHAP. V.

Of natural Conscience, and the moral Sense.

There is yet another disposition or principle, of great importance, natural to mankind; which, if we consider the consistence and harmony of nature's laws, may also be looked upon as in some sort arising from self-love, or self-union; and that is, a disposition in man to be uneasy in a consciousness of being inconsistent with himself, and as it were against himself in his own actions. This appears particularly in the inclination of the mind to be uneasy in the consciousness of doing that to others, which he should be angry with them for doing to him, if they were in his case, and he in theirs; or of forbearing to do that to them, which he would be displeased with them for neglecting to do to him.

I have observed from time to time, that in *pure love to others*, i. e. love not arising from self-love, there is an union of the heart with others; a kind of enlargement of the mind, whereby it so extends itself as to take others into a man's self: and therefore it implies a disposition to feel, to desire, and to act as though others were one with ourselves. So, *self-love* implies an inclination to feel and act as one with ourselves; which naturally renders a sensible inconsistence with ourselves, and self-opposition in what we ourselves choose and do, to be uneasy to the mind: which will cause uneasiness of mind to be the consequence of a malevolent and unjust behaviour towards others, and a kind of disapprobation of acts of this nature, and an approbation of the contrary. To do that to another, which we should be angry with him for doing to us, and to hate a person for doing that to us, which we should

incline to and insist on doing to him, if we were exactly in the same case, is to disagree with ourselves, and contradict ourselves. It would be for ourselves both to choose and adhere to, and yet to refuse and utterly reject the very same thing. No wonder this is contrary to nature. No wonder that such a self-opposition, and inward war with a man's self, naturally begets unquietness, and raises disturbance in his mind.

Thus approving of actions, because we therein act as in agreement with ourselves; and thus disapproving, and being uneasy in the consciousness of disagreeing with *ourselves* in what we do, is quite a different thing from approving or disapproving actions because in them we are united with being in general: which is loving or hating actions from a sense of the primary beauty of true virtue, and of the odiousness of sin. The former of these principles is private; the latter is public, and truly benevolent in the highest sense. The former—an inclination to agree with ourselves—is a natural principle: but the latter—an agreement or union of heart to the great system, and to God the head of it, who is all and all in it—is a divine principle.

In that uneasiness now mentioned, consists very much of that inward trouble men have from reflections of conscience: and when they are free from this uneasiness, and are conscious to themselves, that in what they have acted towards others, they have done the same which they should have expected from them in the same case, then they have what is called peace of conscience, with respect to these actions. And there is also an approbation of conscience, respecting the conduct of others towards ourselves. As when we are blamed, condemned, or punished by them, and are conscious to ourselves that if we were in their case and they in ours, we should in like manner, blame, condemn, and punish them. And thus men's consciences may justify God's anger and condemnation. When they have the ideas of God's greatness, their relation to him, the benefits they have received from him, the manifestations he has made of his will to them, &c. strongly impressed on their minds, a *consciousness* is excited within them of those resentments, which would be occasioned in themselves by an injurious treatment in any wise parallel.

There certainly is such a consciousness as this oftentimes within men, implied in the thoughts and views of the mind, of which perhaps on reflection, they could hardly give an account. Unless men's consciences are greatly stupified, it is naturally and necessarily suggested; and habitually, spontaneously, instantaneously, and as it were insensibly arises in the mind. And the more so for this reason, that we have no other way to conceive of any thing which other persons act

or suffer, but by recalling and exciting the ideas of what we ourselves are conscious we have found in our own minds; and by putting the ideas which we obtain by this means in the place of another; or as it were, substituting ourselves in their place. Thus we have no conception, what understanding, perception, love, pleasure, pain, or desire are in others; but by putting ourselves as it were in their stead, or transferring the ideas we obtain of such things in our own minds by *consciousness* into their place; making such an alteration, as to degree and circumstances, as what we observe of them requires. It is thus in all *moral* things that we conceive of in others; and indeed in every thing we conceive of belonging to others, more than shape, size, complexion, situation, and motion of their bodies. And this is the only way that we come to be *capable* of having ideas of any perception or act even of the Godhead. We never could have any notion what understanding or volition, love or hatred are, either in created spirits or in God, if we had never experienced what understanding and volition, love and hatred are in our own minds. Knowing what they are by *consciousness*, we can deny limits, and remove changeableness and other imperfections, and ascribe them to God.

But though men in thinking of others do as it were put themselves in their place, they do it so habitually, instantaneously, and without set purpose, that they can scarce give any account of it, and many would think it strange if they were told of it. In all a man's thoughts of another person, in whatever he apprehends of his moral conduct to others or to himself, if it be in loving or hating him, approving or condemning him, rewarding or punishing him, he necessarily as it were, puts himself in his stead; and therefore the more naturally, easily, and quietly sees whether he, being in his place, should approve or condemn, be angry or pleased as he is.

Natural conscience consists in these two things.

1. In that disposition to approve or disapprove the moral treatment which passes between us and others, from a determination of the mind to be easy or uneasy, in a consciousness of our being consistent or inconsistent with ourselves. Hereby we have a disposition to *approve* our own treatment of another, when we are conscious to ourselves that we treat him so as we should expect to be treated by him, were he in our case and we in his; and to *disapprove* of our own treatment of another, when we are conscious that we should be displeased with the like treatment from him, if we were in his case. So we in our consciences approve of another's treatment of us, if we are conscious to ourselves, that if we were in his case, and he in ours, we should think it just to treat him as he treats

us; and disapprove his treatment of us, when we are conscious that we should think it unjust, if we were in his case. Thus men's consciences approve or disapprove the sentence of their judge, by which they are acquitted or condemned. But this is not all that is in natural conscience. Besides this approving or disapproving from uneasiness as being inconsistent with ourselves, there is another thing that must precede it, and be the foundation of it. As for instance, when my conscience disapproves my own treatment of another, being conscious to myself, that were I in his case, I should be displeased and angry with him for so treating me; the question might be asked, What would be the ground of that supposed disapprobation, displeasure, and anger, which I am conscious would be in me in that case? Therefore,

2. The other thing which belongs to the approbation or disapprobation of natural conscience, is the sense of *desert* which was spoken of before; consisting as was observed, in a natural agreement, proportion and harmony, between malevolence or injury, and resentment and punishment; or between loving and being loved, between shewing kindness and being rewarded, &c. Both these kinds of approving or disapproving concur in the approbation or disapprobation of conscience: the one founded on the other. Thus when a man's conscience disapproves of his treatment of his neighbour, in the first place he is conscious, that if he were in his neighbour's stead, he should resent such treatment from a sense of justice, or from a sense of uniformity and equality between such treatment, and resentment, and punishment; as before explained. And then in the next place, he perceives that therefore he is not consistent with himself, in doing what he himself should resent in that case; and hence disapproves it, as being naturally averse to opposition to himself.

Approbation and disapprobation of conscience, in the sense now explained, will extend to all virtue and vice; to every thing whatsoever that is morally good or evil, in a mind which does not confine its view to a private sphere, but will take things in general into its consideration, and is free from speculative error. For as all virtue or moral good may be resolved into love to others, either God or creatures; so men easily see the uniformity and natural agreement there is between loving others, and being accepted and favoured by others. And all vice, sin, or moral evil summarily consisting in the *want* of this love to others, or in malevolence; so men easily see the natural agreement there is between hating and doing ill to others, and being hated by them, and suffering ill from them, or from him that acts for all, and has the care of the whole system. And as this sense of equality and natural agreement extends to all moral good and evil; so this lays a foundation of an equal ex-

tent with the other kind of approbation and disapprobation, which is grounded upon it, arising from an aversion to self-inconsistence and opposition. For in all cases of benevolence or the contrary towards others, we are capable of putting ourselves in the place of others, and are naturally led to do it; and so of being conscious to ourselves, how we should like or dislike such treatment from others. Thus natural conscience, if the understanding be properly enlightened, and stupifying prejudices are removed, concurs with the law of God, is of equal extent with it, and joins its voice with it in every article.

And thus, in particular, we may see in what respect this natural conscience extends to *true virtue*, consisting in union of heart to being in general, and *supreme love to God.* For although it sees not, or rather does not *taste* its primary and essential beauty, *i. e.* it tastes no sweetness in benevolence to being in general, simply considered, for nothing but general benevolence itself can do that, yet this natural conscience, common to mankind, may *approve* of it from that uniformity, equality and *justice*, which there is in it; and the *demerit* which is seen in the contrary, consisting in the natural agreement between the contrary, and being hated of being in general. Men, by natural conscience, may see the justice or natural agreement, there is in yielding all to God, as we receive all from him; and the justice there is in being his that made us, and willingly so, which is the same as being dependent on his will, and conformed to it in the *manner* of our being; as we are for our being itself, and in the conformity of our will to his, on whose will we are universally and most perfectly dependent. There is also *justice* in our *supreme love* to God; a natural agreement in our having a supreme respect to him who exercises infinite goodness to us, and from whom we receive all well-being. Besides disagreement and discord appears worse to natural sense in things nearly related, and of great importance: and therefore it must appear very ill, as it respects the infinite Being, and in that infinitely great relation which there is between the Creator and his creatures. And it is easy to conceive how natural conscience should see the desert of punishment, in the contrary of true virtue, *viz.* opposition and enmity to being in general. For this is only to see the *natural agreement* there is between opposing being in general, and being opposed by being in general; with a consciousness how, if we were infinitely great, we should expect to be regarded according to our greatness, and should proportionably resent contempt. This natural conscience, if well-informed, will *approve* of true virtue, and will disapprove and condemn the want of it, and opposition to it; and yet without seeing the true beauty of it. Yea, if men's consciences were fully enlightened, if they were delivered from being confined to

a private sphere, and brought to view and consider things in general, and delivered from being stupified by sensual objects and appetites, as they will be at the day of judgment, they would approve nothing but true virtue, nothing but general benevolence and those affections and actions that are consistent with it, and subordinate to it. For they must see that consent to being in general, and supreme respect to the Being of beings, is most just; and that every thing which is inconsistent with it, and interferes with it, or flows from the want of it, is unjust and deserves the opposition of universal existence.

Thus has God established and ordered that this principle of *natural conscience*, which, though it implies no such thing as actual benevolence to being in general, nor any delight in such a principle, simply considered, and so implies no truly spiritual sense or virtuous taste, yet should approve and condemn the same things that are approved and condemned by a spiritual sense or virtuous taste. And that *moral sense* which is natural to mankind, so far as it is disinterested, and not founded in association of ideas, is the *same* with this natural conscience.

The sense of moral good and evil, and that disposition to approve virtue and disapprove vice, which men have by natural conscience, is that *moral sense* so much insisted on in the writings of many of late. A misunderstanding of this seems to have misled those moralists, who have insisted on a *disinterested* moral sense, universal in the world of mankind, as an evidence of a disposition to true virtue, consisting in a benevolent temper, naturally implanted in the minds of all men. Some of the arguments used by these writers, indeed prove that there is a moral sense or taste, universal among men, distinct from what arises from *self-love*. Though I humbly conceive there is some confusion in their discourses on the subject, and not a proper distinction observed in the instances of men's approbation of virtue which they produce. Some of which are not to their purpose, being instances of that approbation of virtue which arises from self-love. But other instances prove, that there is a moral taste, or sense of moral good and evil, natural to all, which do not properly arise from self-love. Yet I conceive there are no instances of this kind which may not be referred to *natural conscience*, and particularly to that which I have observed to be *primary* in the approbation of natural conscience, *viz.* a sense of *desert*, and approbation of that natural agreement there is, in manner and measure in *justice*. But I think it is plain from what has been said, that neither this, nor any thing else wherein consists the sense of moral good and evil which there is in natural conscience, is of the nature of a truly virtuous taste, or determination of mind to relish and delight in the essential beauty of true virtue, arising from a virtuous benevolence of heart.

But it further appears from this; if the approbation of *con-*

science were the same with the approbation of the *inclination of the heart*, or the natural disposition and determination of the mind to love and be pleased with virtue, then approbation and condemnation of conscience would always be in *proportion* to the virtuous temper of the mind; or rather, the degree would be just the *same*. In that person who had a high degree of a virtuous temper, therefore, the testimony of conscience in favour of virtue would be equally full: But he who had but little, would have as little a degree of the testimony of conscience for virtue, and against vice. But I think the case is evidently otherwise. Some men, through the strength of vice in their hearts, will go on in sin against clearer light and stronger convictions of conscience than others. If conscience, approving duty and disapproving sin, were the same thing as the exercise of a virtuous principle of the heart, in loving duty and hating sin, then *remorse* of conscience will be the same thing as *repentance;* and just in the same degree as the sinner feels *remorse* of conscience for sin, in the same degree is the heart turned from the love of sin to the *hatred* of it, inasmuch as they are the very same thing.

Christians have the greatest reason to believe, from the scriptures, that in the future day of the revelation of the righteous judgment of God, when sinners shall be called to answer before their judge, and all their wickedness, in all its aggravations, brought forth and clearly manifested in the perfect light of that day; and God will reprove them, and set their sins in order before them, their consciences will be greatly awakened and convinced, their mouths will be stopped, all stupidity of conscience will be at an end, and conscience will have its full exercise; and therefore their consciences will *approve* the dreadful sentence of the judge against them; and seeing that they have deserved so great a punishment, will join with the judge in condemning them. And this according to the notion I am opposing, would be the same thing as their being brought to the fullest *repentance;* their hearts being perfectly changed to hate sin and love holiness; and virtue or holiness of heart in them will be brought to the most full and perfect exercise. But how much otherwise have we reason to suppose it will then be? Then the sin and wickedness of their heart will come to its highest dominion and completest exercise; they shall be wholly left of God, and given up to their wickedness, even as the devils are! When God has done waiting on sinners, and his Spirit done striving with them, he will not restrain their wickedness, as he does now. But sin shall then rage in their hearts, as a fire no longer restrained or kept under. It is proper for a judge when he condemns a criminal, to endeavour so to set his guilt before him as to convince his conscience of the justice of the sentence. This the Almighty will do effectually, and do to per-

fection, so as most thoroughly to awaken and convince the conscience. But if natural conscience and the disposition of the heart to be pleased with virtue, were the *same*, then at the same time that the conscience was brought to its perfect exercise, the heart would be made perfectly holy; or would have the exercise of true virtue and holiness in perfect benevolence of temper. But instead of this, their wickedness will then be brought to perfection, and wicked men will become very devils, and accordingly will be sent away as cursed into everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels.

But supposing natural conscience to be what has been described, all these difficulties and absurdities are wholly avoided. Sinners when they see the greatness of the being in contempt of whom they have lived with rebellion and opposition and have clearly set before them their obligations to him as their Creator, preserver, benefactor, &c. together with the degree in which they have acted as enemies to him, may have a clear sense of the *desert* of their sin, consisting in the *natural agreement* there is between such contempt and opposition of such a being, and his despising and opposing them; between their *being* and acting as so great enemies to such a God, and their *suffering* the dreadful consequences of his being and acting as their great enemy; and their being conscious within themselves of the degree of anger, which would naturally arise in their own hearts in such a case, if they were in the place and state of their judge. In order to these things, there is no need of a virtuous benevolent temper, relishing and delighting in benevolence, and loathing the contrary. The conscience may *see* the natural agreement between opposing and being opposed, between hating and being hated, without *abhorring* malevolence from a benevolent temper of mind, or without *loving* God from a view of the beauty of his holiness. These things have no necessary dependence one on the other.

CHAP. VI.

Of particular instincts of Nature, which in some respects resemble virtue.

There are various dispositions and inclinations natural to men, which depend on particular laws of nature, determining their minds to certain affections and actions towards particular objects; which laws seem to be established chiefly for

the preservation of mankind, and their comfortably subsisting in the world. These dispositions may be called *instincts.*

Some of these instincts respect only ourselves personally: such are many of our natural appetites and aversions. Some of them are more social, and extend to others: such are the mutual inclinations between the sexes, &c.—Some of these dispositions are more *external* and sensitive: such are those that relate to meat and drink, and the more sensitive inclinations of the sexes towards each other. Others are more *internal* and mental: consisting in affections which mankind naturally exercise towards some of their fellow-creatures, and in some cases towards men in general. Some of these may be called *kind* affections; as having something in them of benevolence, or a resemblance of it: and others are of an *angry* appearance; such as the passion of jealousy between the sexes, especially in the male towards the female.

It is only the former of these two last mentioned sorts that it is to my purpose to consider in this place, *viz.* those natural instincts which have the appearance of benevolence and so in some respects resemble virtue. These I shall therefore consider; and shall endeavour to shew, that none of them can be of the nature of true virtue.

That kind affection which is exercised one towards another in natural relation, particularly the love of parents to their children, called natural affection, is by many referred to instinct. I have already considered this sort of love as an affection that arises from self-love: and in that view, have shewn it cannot be of the nature of true virtue. But if any think, that natural affection is more properly to be referred to a particular instinct of nature than to self-love, as its cause, I shall not think it a point worthy of any controversy or dispute. In my opinion *both* are true; *viz.* that natural affection is owing to natural instinct, and also that it arises from self-love. It may be said to arise from instinct, as it depends on a law of nature. But yet it may be truly reckoned as an affection arising from self-love; because, though it arises from a law of nature, yet that is such a law as according to the order and harmony every where observed among the laws of nature, is connected with, and follows from self-love; as was shewn before. However, it is not necessary to my present purpose to insist on this. For if natural affection to a man's children or near relations, is an affection arising from a particular independent instinct of nature—which the Creator in his wisdom has implanted in men for the preservation and well-being of the world of mankind: yet it cannot be of the nature of true virtue. For it has been observed, and I humbly conceive, proved before, (Chap. II.) that if any being or beings have by natural instinct, or any other means, a determination

of mind to benevolence, extending only to some particular persons or *private* system, however large that system may be—or however great a number of individuals it may contain, so long as it contains but an infinitely small part of universal existence, and so bears no proportion to this great and universal system—such limited private benevolence, not *arising* from, not being *subordinate* to benevolence to being in general, cannot have the nature of true virtue. However, it may not be amiss briefly to observe now, that it is evident to a demonstration those affections connot be of the nature of true virtue, from these two things.

First, That they do not arise from a *principle* of virtue. A principle of virtue, I think, is owned by the most considerable of late writers on morality to be general benevolence or public affection: and I think it has been proved to be union of heart to being simply considered; which implies a disposition to benevolence to being in general. Now by the supposition, the affections we are speaking of do not arise from this principle; and that, whether we suppose they arise from self-love, or from particular instinct: because either of those sources is diverse from a principle of general benevolence. And,

Secondly, These private affections, if they do not arise from general benevolence, and they are not connected with it in their first existence, have no tendency to produce it. This appears from what has been observed: for being not dependent on it, their detached and unsubordinate operation rather implies *opposition* to being in general, than general benevolence; as every one sees and owns with respect to self-love. And there are the very same reasons why any other private affection, confined to limits infinitely short of universal existence, should have that influence, as well as love that is confined to a single person. Now upon the whole, nothing can be plainer than that affections which do not arise from a virtuous principle, and have no tendency to true virtue as their effect, cannot be of the nature of true virtue.

For the reasons which have been given, it is undeniably true, that if persons have a benevolent affection limited to a party, or to the nation in general of which they are a part, or the public community to which they belong, though it be as large as the Roman empire was of old: yea, if there could be a cause determining a person to benevolence towards the whole world of mankind, or even all created sensible natures throughout the universe, exclusive of union of heart to general existence and of love to God—not derived from that temper of mind which disposes to a supreme regard to him, nor subordinate to such divine love—it cannot be of the nature of true virtue.

If what is called natural affection arises from a particular

natural instinct, much more indisputably does that mutual affection which naturally arises between the sexes. I agree with HUTCHISON and HUME in this, that there is a foundation laid in nature for kind affections between the sexes, diverse from all inclinations to sensitive pleasure, and which do not properly arise from any such inclination. There is doubtless a disposition both to a mutual benevolence and mutual complacence, that are not naturally and necessarily connected with any sensitive desires. But yet it is manifest such affections as are limited to opposite sexes, are from a particular instinct thus directing and limiting them; and not arising from a principle of general benevolence; for this has no tendency to any such limitation. And though these affections do not properly arise from the sensitive desires which are between the sexes, yet they are implanted by the Author of Nature chiefly for the same purpose, *viz.* the preservation or continuation of the world of mankind. Hereby persons become willing to forsake father and mother, and all their natural relations in the families where they were born and brought up, for the sake of a stated union with a companion of the other sex, in bearing and going through that series of labours, anxieties, and pains, requisite to the being, support, and education of a family of children; and partly also for the comfort of mankind as united in a marriage-relation. But I suppose, few, if any, will deny, that the peculiar natural dispositions there are to mutual affection between the sexes, arise from an *instinct* or particular law of nature. And therefore it is manifest, from what has been said already, that those natural dispositions cannot be of the nature of true virtue.

Another affection, which is owing to a particular instinct, is that pity which is natural to mankind when they see others in great distress. It is acknowledged, that such an affection is *natural* to mankind. But I think it evident, that the pity which is general and natural, is owing to a particular instinct, and is not of the nature of true virtue. I am far from saying that there is no such thing as a truly *virtuous pity* among mankind; or that none is to be found, which arises from that truly virtuous divine principle of general benevolence to sensitive beings. Yet at the same time I think, this is not the case with ALL pity, or with that disposition to pity which is *natural* to mankind in common. I think I may be bold to say, this does not arise from benevolence, nor is it properly called by that name.

If all that uneasiness on the sight of others' extreme distress which we call pity, were properly of the nature of benevolence, then they who are the subjects of this passion, must needs be in a degree of uneasiness, in being sensible of the total want of happiness of all such as they would be disposed to pity in extreme distress. For that certainly is the most direct

tendency and operation of benevolence or good will, to desire the happiness of its object. But now this is not the case universally, where men are disposed to exercise pity. There are many who would not be sensibly affected with any uneasiness to know that others were *dead*, yea, men who are not influenced by the consideration of a future state, but view death as only a cessation of all sensibility, and consequently an end of all happiness—who yet would have been moved with pity towards the same persons, if they had seen them under some very extreme anguish. Some would be moved with pity by seeing a brute-creature under extreme and long torments, who yet suffer no uneasiness in knowing that many thousands of them every day cease to live, and so have an end put to all their pleasure. It is the nature of true benevolence to desire and rejoice in the prosperity and pleasure of its object; and that in some proportion to its degree of prevalence. But persons may greatly pity those that are in extreme pain, whose positive pleasure they may still be very indifferent about. In this case, a man may be much moved and affected with uneasiness, who yet would be affected with no sensible joy in seeing signs of the same person's enjoyment of very high degrees of pleasure.

Yea, pity may not only be without benevolence, but may consist with true malevolence, or with such ill will as shall cause men not only not to desire the positive happiness of another, but even to desire his calamity. They may pity such an one when his calamity goes beyond their hatred. A man may have true malevolence towards another, desiring no positive good for him, but evil; and yet his hatred not be infinite, but only to a certain degree. And when he sees the person whom he thus hates in misery far beyond his ill will, he may then pity him: because then the natural instinct begins to operate. For malevolence will not overcome the natural instinct inclining to pity others in extreme calamity, any further than it goes, or to the limits of the degree of misery it wishes to its object. Men may pity others under exquisite torment, when yet they would have been grieved if they had seen their prosperity. And some have such a grudge against another, that they would be far from uneasy at their very death, nay, would even be glad of it. And when this is the case, it is manifest that their heart is void of benevolence towards such persons, and under the power of malevolence. Yet at the same time, they are capable of pitying even these very persons, if they should see them under a degree of misery very much disproportioned to their ill will.

These things may convince us, that *natural pity* is of a nature very different from true virtue, and not arising from a disposition of heart to general benevolence; but is owing to a particular instinct, which the Creator has implanted,

chiefly for the preservation of mankind, though not exclusive of their well being. The giving of this instinct is the fruit of God's mercy, and an instance of his love to the world of mankind, and an evidence, that though the world be so sinful, it is not God's design to make it a world of punishment; and therefore has many ways made a merciful provision of relief in extreme calamities. The natural exercises of pity extend beyond those with whom we are nearly connected, especially in cases of great calamity; because commonly in such cases, men stand in need of the help of *others* besides their near friends, and because commonly those calamities which are extreme, without relief, tend to their *destruction*. This may be given as the reason why men are so made by the author of nature, that they have no instinct inclining as much to rejoice at the sight of others' great prosperity and pleasure, as to be grieved at their extreme calamity, *viz.* because they do not stand in equal necessity of such an instinct as that in order to their preservation. But if pure benevolence were the source of natural pity, doubtless it would operate to as great a degree in congratulation, in cases of others, great prosperity, as in compassion towards them in great misery.

The instincts which in some respects resemble a virtuous benevolence, are agreeable to the state that God designed mankind for here, where he intends their preservation and comfortable subsistence. But in the world of punishment—where the state of the wicked inhabitants will be exceeding different, and God will have none of these merciful designs to answer—we have great reason to think, there will be no such thing as a disposition to *pity*, in any case; as also no *natural affection* towards near relations, and no mutual affection between opposite sexes.

To conclude, natural instinct, disposing men to pity others in misery, is also a source of a kind of abhorrence in men of some vices, as cruelty and oppression; and so of a sort of approbation of the contrary virtues, humanity, mercy, &c. which aversion and approbation however, so far as they arise from this cause only, and not from a principle of true virtue.

CHAP. VII.

The Reasons why those things that have been mentioned, which have not the essence of Virtue, have yet by many been mistaken for true Virtue.

The first reason may be this, that although they have not the specific and distinguishing nature and essence of virtue, yet they have something that *belongs to the general nature* of virtue. The general nature of true virtue is love. It is expressed both in love of benevolence and complacence; but *primarily* in benevolence to persons and beings, and consequently and *secondarily* in complacence in virtue, as has been shewn. There is something of the *general nature* of virtue in those natural affections and principles that have been mentioned, in both those respects.

In many of these *natural affections* there appears the *tendency* and *effect* of benevolence in part. Others have truly a sort of private benevolence, but which in several respects falls short of the extent of true virtuous benevolence, both in its nature and object. *Pity* to others in distress, though not properly of the nature of love, as has been demonstrated, yet has partly the same influence and effect with benevolence. One effect of true benevolence is for persons to be uneasy when the objects of it are in distress, and to desire their relief. And natural pity has the same effect.

Natural *gratitude*, though not properly called love—because persons may be moved with a degree of gratitude towards others on certain occasions for whom they have no real and proper friendship; as in the instance of Saul towards David, once and again, after David's sparing his life when he had so fair opportunity to kill him—yet has the like operation and effect with friendship, in part, for a season, and with regard to so much of the welfare of its object, as appears a deserved requital of kindness received. And in other instances, it may have a more general and abiding influence, so as more properly to be called by the name of love. So that many times men, from natural gratitude, do really with a sort of benevolence, love those who love them. From this, together with some other natural principles, men may love their near friends, their own party, their country, &c. The natural disposition there is to mutual affection between the sexes, often operates by what may properly be called love. There is oftentimes truly a kind both of benevolence and complacence. As there also is between parents and children.

Thus these things have something of the *general nature* of

virtue. What they are essentially defective in is, that they are *private* in their nature; they do not arise from any temper of benevolence to being in general, nor have they a tendency to any such effect in their operation. But yet agreeing with virtue in its general nature, they are *beautiful* within their own *private sphere*, i. e. they appear beautiful if we confine our views to that private system, and while we shut out all other things to which they stand related from our consideration. If that private system contained the sum of universal existence, their benevolence would have true beauty; or in other words, would be beautiful, all things considered; but now it is not so. These private systems are so far from containing the sum of universal being, or comprehending all existence to which we stand related, that it contains but an infinitely small part of it. The reason why men are so ready to take these private affections for true virtue, is the narrowness of their views; and above all, that they are so ready to leave the divine Being out of their view, and to neglect him in their consideration, or to regard him in their thoughts as though he did not properly belong to the system of real existence, but was a kind of shadowy, imaginary being. And though most men allow that there is a God, yet in their ordinary view of things, his being is not apt to come into the account, and to have the influence and effect of a real existence, as it is with other beings which they see, and are conversant with by their external senses. In their views of beauty and deformity, and in their inward sensations of displicence and approbation, it is not natural to them to view the Deity as part of the system, and as the head of it, in comparison of whom all other things are to be viewed with corresponding impressions.

Yea, we are apt, through the narrowness of our views, in judging of the beauty of affections and actions, to *limit* our consideration to only a small part of the created system. When private affections extend themselves to a considerable number, we are ready to look upon them as truly virtuous, and accordingly to applaud them highly. Thus it is with respect to a man's love to a large party, or a country. For though his private system contains but a *small part* even of the world of mankind, yet being a considerable number, they—through the contracted limits of his mind, and the narrowness of his views—are ready to engross his sight, and to seem as if they were *all*. Hence, among the *Romans*, love to their country was the highest virtue; though this affection of theirs so much extolled, was employed as it were for the destruction of the rest of mankind. The larger the number is, to which that private affection extends, the more apt men are, through the narrowness of their sight, to mistake it for true virtue; because then the private system appears to have more of the image of the universal.

And this is the reason why *self-love* is not mistaken for true

virtue. For though there be something of the general nature of virtue in it, as love and goodwill, yet the object is so private, the limits so narrow, that it by no means engrosses the view ; unless it be of the person himself, who through the greatness of his pride may imagine himself as it were *all*. The minds of men are large enough to take in a vastly greater extent. And though self-love is far from being useless in the world, yea, it is exceeding necessary to society ; yet every body sees that if it be not *subordinate* to, and regulated by another more extensive principle, it may make a man a common *enemy* to the general system. And this is as true of *any other private affection*, notwithstanding its extent may be to a system that contains millions of individuals. And though *private* systems bear no greater proportion to the *whole* of universal existence, than one alone; yet they bear a greater proportion to the view and comprehension of men's minds, and are more apt to be regarded as if they were *all*, or at least as some resemblance of the universal system.

Thus I have observed how many of these natural principles resemble virtue in its *primary* operation, which is *benevolence*. Many of them also have a resemblance of it in its *secondary* operation, which is its *approbation* of, and complacence in virtue itself. Several kinds of approbation of virtue are not of the nature of a truly *virtuous* approbation, consisting in a sense and relish of the essential beauty of virtue. As particularly, the approbation of conscience, from a sense of the inferior and *secondary* beauty which there is in virtue, consisting in *uniformity;* and from a sense of *desert*, consisting in a sense of the *natural agreement* of loving and being beloved, shewing kindness and receiving kindness. So from the same principle, there is a disapprobation of vice, from a natural opposition to deformity and disproportion ; and a sense of evil desert, or the natural agreement there is between hating and being hated, opposing and being opposed, &c. together with a painful sensation naturally arising from a sense of self-opposition and inconsistence. Approbation of conscience is the more readily mistaken for a truly virtuous approbation, because by the wise constitution of the great Governor of the world, when conscience is well informed and thoroughly awakened, it agrees with him fully and exactly as to the object approved, though not as to the ground and reason of approving. It approves all virtue, and condemns all vice. It approves true virtue and indeed approves nothing that is against it, or that falls short of it; as was shewn before. Natural conscience is implanted in all mankind, to be as it were in God's stead, as an internal judge or rule, whereby to distinguish right and wrong.

It has also been observed, how that virtue, consisting in benevolence, is approved; and vice, consisting in ill will, is

disliked; from the influence of *self-love*, together with the association of ideas. In the same manner men *dislike* those qualities in things without life or reason, with which they have always connected the ideas of hurtfulness, malignancy, perniciousness; but *approve* those things with which they habitually connect the ideas of profit, pleasantness, &c. This approbation of virtue and dislike of vice, is easily mistaken for true virtue, not only because those things are approved by it that have the nature of virtue, and the things disliked have the nature of vice; but because here is a great resemblance of virtuous approbation, it being complacence from love; the difference only lying in this, that it is not from love to being in general, but from self-love.

There is also, as before shewn, a liking of some virtues and a dislike of some vices, from the influence of the natural instinct of *pity*. This we are apt to mistake for the exercise of true virtue on many accounts. Here is not only a kind of complacence, and the objects of complacence have the nature of virtue, and the virtues themselves are very amiable, such as humanity, mercy, tenderness of heart, &c. and the contrary very odious; but besides, the approbation is not merely from self-love, but from *compassion*; an affection that respects others, and resembles benevolence, as before explained.

Another reason why the things mentioned are mistaken for true virtue, is, that there is indeed a true *negative* moral goodness in them. By a negative moral goodness, I mean the negation or absence of true moral evil. They have this negative moral goodness, because being without them would be an evidence of a much greater moral evil. Thus the exercise of natural conscience in such and such degrees, wherein appears such a measure of sensibility, though it be not of the nature of real positive virtue, or true moral goodness, yet has a *negative* moral goodness; because in the present state of things, it is an evidence of the absence of that higher degree of wickedness, which causes great insensibility, or stupidity of conscience. For sin is not only against a spiritual and divine sense of virtue, but is also against the dictates of that moral sense which is in natural conscience. No wonder that this sense, being long opposed and often conquered, grows weaker. All sin has its source from *selfishness*, or from self-love not subordinate to a regard to being in general. And natural conscience chiefly consists in a sense of *desert*, or the natural agreement between sin and misery. But if *self* were indeed *all*, and so more considerable than all the world besides, there would be no ill desert in a man regarding himself *above* all, and making all other interests give place to private interest. And no wonder that men, by long acting from the selfish principle, and by being habituated to treat themselves

as if they were *all*, increase in pride, and come to look on themselves as *all*, and so to lose entirely the sense of ill desert in their making all other interests give place to their own. And no wonder that any, by often repeating acts of sin without punishment, or visible appearance of approaching punishment, have less and less present sense of the connection of sin with punishment.

That sense which an awakened conscience has of the desert of sin, consists chiefly in a sense of its desert of resentment from the Deity, the fountain and head of universal existence. But no wonder that by a long continued worldly and sensual life, men more and more lose all sense of the Deity, who is a spiritual and invisible Being. The mind being long involved in, and engrossed by sensitive objects, becomes *sensual* in all its operations, and excludes all views and impressions of spiritual objects, and is unfit for their contemplation. Thus conscience and general benevolence are entirely different principles; and thus a sense of conscience differs from the holy complacence of a benevolent and truly virtuous heart. Yet wickedness may by long habitual exercise greatly diminish a sense of conscience. So that there may be *negative* moral goodness in sensibility of conscience, as it may be an argument of the absence of that higher degree of wickedness, which causeth stupidity of conscience.

So with respect to natural *gratitude;* though there may be no virtue merely in loving them that love us, yet the contrary may be an evidence of a great degree of depravity, as it may argue a higher degree of selfishness, so that a man is come to look upon himself as all, and others as nothing, and so their respect and kindness as nothing. Thus an increase of pride diminishes gratitude. So doth sensuality, or the increase of sensual appetites; which coming more and more under the power and impression of sensible objects, tends by degrees to make the mind insensible to any thing else. Those appetites take up the whole soul; and, through habit and custom, the water is all drawn out of *other* channels in which it naturally flows, and is all carried as it were into *one* channel.

In like manner, natural affection, and natural pity, though not of the nature of virtue, may be diminished greatly by the increase of pride and sensuality; and as the consequence of this, be habitually disposed to envy, malice, &c. These lusts, when they prevail to a high degree, may overcome and diminish the exercise of those natural principles; even as they often overcome and diminish common prudence in a man, who seeks his own private interest in point of health, wealth, or honour; and yet no one will think it proves that a man being cunning in seeking his own personal and temporal interest, has any thing of the nature and essence of true virtue.

Another reason why these natural principles and affections are mistaken for true virtue, is, that in several respects they have the same *effect* which true virtue tends to; especially in these two ways:

1. The present state of the world is so constituted by the wisdom and goodness of its supreme Ruler, that these natural principles, for the most part, tend to the *good* of mankind. So do natural pity, gratitude, parental affection, &c. Herein they agree with the *tendency* of general benevolence, which seeks and tends to the general good. But this is no proof that these natural principles have the *nature* of true virtue. For self-love is exceeding useful and necessary; and so are the natural appetites of hunger, thirst, &c. Yet nobody will assert that *these* have the nature of true virtue.

2. These principles have a like effect with true virtue in this respect, that they tend several ways to *restrain vice*, and prevent many acts of wickedness. So natural affection, love to our party, or to particular friends, tends to keep us from acts of injustice towards these persons; which would be real wickedness. Pity preserves from cruelty, which would be real and great moral evil. Natural conscience tends to restrain sin in general. But this cannot prove these principles themselves to be of the nature of true virtue. For so is this present state ordered by a merciful God, that even *self-love* often restrains from acts of true wickedness; and not only so, but puts men upon seeking true virtue; yet is not itself true virtue, but is the source of all the wickedness that is in the world.

Another reason why these inferior affections, especially some of them, are accounted virtuous, is, that there are affections of the *same denomination* which are *truly* virtuous. Thus, for instance, there is a truly virtuous *pity*, or a compassion to others under affliction or misery, from general benevolence. Pure benevolence would be sufficient to excite pity to another in calamity, if there were no particular instinct, or any other principle determining the mind thereto. It is easy to see how benevolence, which seeks another's *good*, should cause us to desire his deliverance from *evil*. And this is a source of pity far more extensive than the other. It excites compassion in cases that are overlooked by natural instinct; and even in those cases to which instinct extends, it *mixes its influence* with the natural principle, and *guides* and *regulates its operations*. And when this is the case, the pity which is exercised may be called a *virtuous* compassion. So there is a virtuous *gratitude;* or a gratitude that arises not only from self-love, but from a superior principle of disinterested general benevolence. As when we receive kindness from such as we love already, we are *more* disposed to gratitude, and disposed to greater *degrees* of it,

than when the mind is destitute of any such friendly prepossession. Therefore when the superior principle of virtuous love has a governing hand, and regulates the affair, it may be called a virtuous gratitude. There is also a virtuous love of *justice*, arising from pure benevolence to being in general; as that naturally and necessarily inclines the heart, that every particular being should have such a share of benevolence as is proportioned to its dignity, consisting in the degree of its being and the degree of its virtue. And thus it is easy to see, how there may be a *virtuous* sense of *desert* different from what is natural and common; and a virtuous *conscientiousness*, or a sanctified conscience. And as, when *natural affections* have their operations *mixed* with the influence of virtuous benevolence, and are *directed* and *determined* thereby, they may be called *virtuous;* so there may be a *virtuous* love of parents to children, and between other near relatives; a *virtuous* love of our town, or country, or nation. Yea, and a *virtuous* love between the sexes, as there may be the influence of virtue *mingled* with instinct; and virtue may govern with regard to the particular manner of its operation, and may guide it to such *ends* as are agreeable to the great purposes of true virtue.

Genuine virtue prevents that increase of the habits of pride and sensuality, which tend to diminish the exercises of the useful and necessary principles of nature. And a principle of general benevolence softens and sweetens the mind, makes it more susceptible of the proper influence of the gentler natural instincts, directs every one into its proper channel, determines the exercise to the proper manner and measure, and guides all to the best purposes.*

* In this chapter our very ingenious and judicious author has assigned several reasons why many things are commonly thought to be *virtuous* which in reality are not so, or have no claim to *moral goodness* in the proper acceptation of these words.

It is with some reluctance that we notice in this place a writer, who by his masterly attack on modern infidelity and atheism, has rendered such important service to the cause of truth and virtue; but who seems either to have been dissatisfied with these reasons, or to have omitted a strict examination of them when duty required it. We shall not here inquire into the *candour* of Mr. ROBERT HALL'S remarks in associating President EDWARDS with modern infidels on the subject of virtue; nor on the *congruity* of the business, whereby a definition implying, and an explication declaring the *love of God* to be essential to true virtue, is made to coincide with a definition adopted by *infidels*, and consistent with *atheism* itself. These are his words:

"It is somewhat singular, that many of the fashionable infidels have hit upon a definition of virtue which perfectly coincides with that of certain metaphysical divines in America, first invented and defended by that most acute reasoner, JONATHAN EDWARDS. They both place virtue exclusively in a passion for the general good; or, as Mr. EDWARDS expresses it, *love to being in general:* so that our love is always to be proportioned to the magnitude of its object in the scale of being, which is liable to the objections I have already stated, as well as to many others which the limits of this note will not permit me to enumerate. Let it suffice to remark, (1) That virtue, on these principles, is an utter impossibility: for the system of being, comprehending the great Supreme, is *infinite;* and therefore,

CHAP. VIII.

In what respects Virtue or moral good is founded in sentiment; and how far it is founded in the Reason and Nature of Things.

Virtue is a certain kind of beautiful nature, form, or quality. That form or quality is called *beautiful*, which appears in itself

to maintain the proper proportion, the force of particular attention must be infinitely less than the passion for the general good: but the limits of the human mind are not capable of any emotions so infinitely different *in degree*. (2) Since *our views* of the extent of the universe are capable of perpetual enlargement, admitting the sum of existence is ever the same, we must return back at each step to diminish the strength of particular affections, or they will become disproportionate; and consequently, on these principles, vicious: so that the balance must be continually fluctuating, by the weights being taken out of one scale and put into the other. (3) If virtue consist *exclusively* in love to being in general, or attachment to the general good, the particular affections are, to every purpose of virtue, useless, and even pernicious; for their immediate, nay, their necessary tendency is to attract to their objects a proportion of attention which far exceeds their comparative value in the general scale. To allege that the *general good* is promoted by them, will be of no advantage to the defence of this system, but the contrary, by confessing that a greater sum of happiness is attained by a deviation from, than an adherence to its principles; unless its advocates mean by the love of being in general, the same thing as the private affections, which is to confound all the distinctions of language, as well as all the operations of mind. Let it be remembered we have no dispute respecting what is the ultimate end of virtue, which is allowed on both sides to be the greatest sum of happiness in the universe. The question is merely what is *virtue itself;* or, in other words, what are the means appointed for the attainment of that end?"

There is little doubt, from some parts of Mr. GODWIN'S work, entitled "*Political Justice*," as well as from his early habits of reading, that he was indebted to Mr. EDWARDS for his principal arguments against the private affections; though, with a daring consistence, he has pursued his principles to an extreme from which that most excellent man would have revolted with horror. The fundamental error of the whole system arose, as I conceive, from a mistaken pursuit of simplicity; from a wish to construct a moral system without leaving sufficient scope for the infinite variety of moral phenomena and mental combination; in consequence of which its advocates were induced to place virtue *exclusively* in some *one disposition* of mind: and since the passion for the general good is undeniably the *noblest* and most extensive of all others, when it was once resolved to place virtue in any *one thing*, there remained little room to hesitate which should be preferred. It might have been worth while to reflect, that in the natural world there are two kinds of attraction; one, which holds several *parts* of individual bodies in contact; another, which maintains the union of bodies themselves with the general system: and that, though the union in the former case is much more *intimate* than in the latter, each is equally essential to the order of the world. Similar to this is the relation which the public and private affections bear to each other, and their use in the moral system." (Modern Infidelity considered, p. 62, &c. Note, sixth edition.)

On this note, so very uncongenial with the body of the work, we were going to say, as unseemly when connected with the discourse, as a deforming wart on a fair countenance, justice constrains us to make a few remarks.

1. "Singular" indeed would it be to find an ATHEIST, or an *infidel*, who should even *approve* of EDWARDS' definition, and still more "singular" to find them *maintaining*, in conformity with his explanation of that definition, that *supreme love to God* is of the essence of true virtue. But so far are their definitions from "coinciding," that they differ *toto cœlo*. A passionate attachment for the wel-

agreeable or comely, or the view of which is immediately pleasant to the mind. I say agreeable *in itself*, and *immedi-*

fare of a country, or "a passion for the general good," in any sense wherein this expression can be ascribed to infidels, is a representation not more different from that of President Edwards, than Mr. Hall is different from Voltaire or D'Alembert. Our author's meaning, as explained by himself, is as truly sublime as theirs is truly selfish and contracted. For their definition had no regard to the Being of beings; but this adorable Being is necessarily *included* in Mr. E.'s definition, and essential to it. We say, is "included," because the Supreme Being, together with every derived existence, is *contained* in "being in general."

2. If by a "metaphysical divine" be meant a "most acute reasoner," we feel no objection in having the term "metaphysical" applied to our author, for few, if any, have deserved it better. If error and absurdity appeal to metaphysical discussions, and involve the truth in a labyrinth of sophisms, surely hard would be the case of a man who should be called by an opprobrious name, for venturing into that labyrinth by the light of essential principles, in order to detect and expose false reasoning.

3. Mr. H. objects to the sentiment, "that our love is always to be proportioned to the magnitude of its object in the scale of being." We presume however he will allow, that the whole system of being is *in itself* the most worthy of being prized, *other things being equal.* But if so, the nature of true virtue requires this regard to the whole system of being, compared with its parts. Nor does it follow from this, that the same principle, in the progress of its operations, disregards the smaller circle of attachments. Surely a virtuous person, loving God supremely, is not on that account less qualified for personal and domestic duties. Besides, Mr. E. does not maintain that our love is always to be proportioned to the magnitude of its object in the scale of being, except where *other things are equal.* This he expressly and repeatedly mentions—"other things being equal." To this important distinction Mr. H. does not appear to have adverted; his representation of the case therefore is defective, and calculated to mislead the unwary.

4. Mr. H's statement in the *first* objection, does not distinguish between the *nature* of the attachment and its *force* or *degree.* A little reflection will fully shew, that these are entirely distinct considerations. The greatest *force*, or the highest *degree* of attachment, may exist, when the *nature* of it is not at all virtuous. If indeed attachment be made to include accurate knowledge, a divine relish, and *deliberate esteem* in appreciating the worth of any object, then the degree of attachment may be justly considered as proportionate to the "magnitude of the object in the scale of being," but not otherwise. A truly virtuous mother, for instance, may have a great *force* of affection for her child, or husband, and be more conscious of it than of her love to God; but let her be put to the test of *deliberate esteem*, and she would sooner part with child, husband, or life itself, than renounce her supreme love to God

5. Our author's representation of true virtue by no means implies, as Mr. H. supposes, that the *degree* or *force* of attachment, *in its operation*, should bear an *exact proportion* to the magnitude of its object. The *nature* of virtue indeed is to be denominated according to its object, but its *degree* must necessarily be measured *pro captu agentis.* The *nature* of love to God may be the same in the heart of a child, as in that of an angel, because the *object* of it is the same; but the *degree* of it will be as differently varied as the views and capacities of the subjects. It is not a little surprising how Mr H came to imagine, that our author held the sentiment he is pleased to ascribe to him, a sentiment so absurd as to be held, we apprehend, by no person in the world; a sentiment which requires an *infinite* force of affection from a *finite* being, an affection equal in degree to that of his Maker.

6. So far is the exercise of virtue, according to Mr. E's definition, from being an impossibility, that we think he has fully proved there can be no true virtue on any other principle To illustrate this, suppose a man has a *strong* attachment to *himself*, but none to his family; will that force of affection constitute him virtuous? Again, suppose his affection, with any assignable force, be extended to his *family* but repels the well founded claims of a whole *nation*, can that be virtuous? Or if he extend his force of affection to a whole *nation*, if it repels all the human race beside, can it be virtuous? Moreover, suppose his ardent affection embrace

ately pleasant, to distinguish it from things which in *themselves* are not so, but either indifferent or disagreeable; which yet

the whole human kind, can it be virtuous while it repels all other created beings? Or if, together with himself, he feels an affectionate attachment, in different and proportionate degrees, to *every created being*, but repels the Creator of all, can that forcible and orderly affection be denominated truly virtuous. If the reply be in the affirmative, then an *atheist* may be virtuous, which is absurd. Therefore attachment to the *supreme Being*, or to *being in general*, is essential to the *very nature* of true virtue.

7. No one yet denied, except those who deny the being of a God, that *supreme love to him* is virtuous, if any thing be so. The great Supreme is *infinite*, and if he ought not to be loved *according* to his greatness, what constitutes the crime of Idolatry? And if supreme love to an infinite being were *inconsistent* with subordinate attachments, we ought to extinguish the supremacy of our love to God, before we could discharge our duty to our fellow creatures, which every one must allow to be preposterous.

8 As the *second* objection is founded on the same principle which was assumed in the first, it has been already virtually answered. But it may be controverted on another account. That "extended views," diminish the strength of particular affections does not appear consonant with experience Is it consistent with experience, that the acquisition of a *second* friend must rob the first of a moiety of his friendly affection? Does a parent experience any diminution of affection to a first child, in proportion to a subsequent increase of number? Has a tenth child but a tenth part of a mother's former affection to her first? Does a man love his neighbour the *less* because his views are extended to an *infinite* object? Or when the heart, or supremacy of affection, is fixed on God, is virtuous affection to man diminished?

9. Besides, this objection proceeds on another gratuitous principle, viz that there may be true virtue, or virtuous affection, when our *views* of existence do not include God For if we *view him*, we view an object *infinite* and *unchangeable*, who is *all in all*, and the sum of existence. That our *views* of the *extent* of the created universe are capable of perpetual enlargement, is no good reason why "particular affections" should fluctuate, become disproportionate, or vicious; any more than the love of God should constitute the love of our neighbour criminal. So that there is no necessity for "the balance to be continually fluctuating by the weights being taken out of one scale and put into the other;" except it be by correcting past mistakes, as those do, who when grown up to manhood, put away childish things.

10. Virtuous love, however forcible to oneself, to relatives, to a nation, to mankind, or to the whole created universe, is not *virtuous* because of this particular, private, or limited attachment, but because of its *tendency to God*, except we prostitute the term virtue to signify something claimed equally by the worst and the best of men. And this general attachment, or love to God and universal being, does not at all counteract, or even lessen, the commendable force of private ones, any more than the force of general *gravity* tends to destroy the force of *cohesion*.

11. Mr H.'s *third* and last objection, like the preceding ones, rests on a mistaken apprehension of Mr. E.'s real sentiment. Mr. H. still confounds the *nature* of attachment with its *degree*. If virtue, according to Mr. E. consists *exclusively* in love to being in general, his meaning is, that no *force* of affection which has not *universal being* for its ultimate *object*, can be *virtuous* in the most proper sense of the word. He cannot mean that there is no virtuous love to *particular* beings; for, in perfect consistency with his views, even a love of *ourselves* may be virtuous, as well as a love of our *neighbour* What he maintains then is, that the love of ourselves, of our neighbour, our nation, or any private system whatever, if *detached* from a *tendency* of affection to *universal* being, is not truly virtuous. And what is this, more or less, than what all judicious divines have maintained, that he who does not *really* love God, does not *truly* love his neighbour? If Mr. E. uses language more philosophically exact, and investigates the principle on which a commonly received truth is founded, he certainly deserves commendation rather than blame.

12. On Mr. E.'s principles, the particular affections are so far from being "useless," that their operations are not at all affected by those principles, except

appear eligible and agreeable *indirectly*, for something else with which they are connected. Such indirect agreeableness

in being more exalted and refined. When the heart is enlarged to the love of being in general, it *includes* all *particular* objects; and then the attachment to them is *for the sake* of the whole system of being. Thus a truly virtuous love of our neighbour *springs from* our love to God; or without a supreme regard to God, there is no genuine, or in the highest sense, praiseworthy love to our neighbour. And so far are particular affections from being "pernicious," on Mr. E.'s principles, that they are highly *useful*. Those objects which contain, or are apprehended to contain only a *secondary* beauty, attract a particular affection which is useful in various respects, as explained by our author; and those which contain the *primary* beauty, attract affections still more useful. For governors, and subjects, and friends, and relatives to feel attachment to their subjects, governors, friends, and relatives, must be *useful*, even when not virtuous; but when these attachments are animated, regulated, and ennobled by the love of God, or benevolence to universal being, they must be still *more* so. Benevolent affections are like a pleasant flame; a flame which is not *lessened* by an addition of fuel. Zeal at *home* is not found in fact to be weakened by the extension of zealous and benevolent affections *abroad*. National reform, and religious revival, will not be impeded by a truly benevolent missionary spirit. Neither will the love of God, or of universal being, prove detrimental to "particular affections."

13. Respecting the "particular affections," Mr. H remarks, that "their immediate, nay their necessary tendency is, to attract to their object a proportion of attention, which far exceeds their comparative value in the general scale." But surely "attention" is a very different thing from "attachment." A man who is about to buy a horse, has his *attention* attracted very forcibly to the size, the shape, the age, and the action of the animal; but does this imply *attachment?* The word *Satan* may attract our "attention" to the malevolent being signified by it; but does this prove that the "immediate, nay the necessary tendency" of the word is to attract to this object any degree of "attachment?" It would be difficult to find either man, woman, or child, but has much "attention attracted" to what he does not esteem, and to which he feels no attachment. If a person feels an attachment to any object not founded on the "comparative value" of that object, let the "particular affection" be denominated as we please, but let us not attach to it the idea of *true virtue*. For why should we be tempted to call that *truly virtuous* which has no relation to God, the object and fountain of all excellence?

14. It is but justice to our author to say, that his definition of virtue, against which Mr. H. objects, by no means countenances that perversion of our powers which is but too justly ascribed to modern infidels. No one acting on the principles of this Dissertation will be less amiable in private life, than when acting on any others which Mr. H. might point out. This hypothesis, which we believe is the *scriptural* one, and which in substance has been maintained by theological writers and holy men of every age, pours no chilling influence on the affections, encourages no unscriptural disregards or antipathies in society, nor does it countenance any neglect of private duties under pretence of public utility We are assured by an authority from which, in the views of christians, there lies no appeal, that "*to love God with all our heart*," is the first and great commandment. We would fain know, if knowable, wherein this requisition differs from that which is implied in Mr. E.'s notion of true virtue? Moreover, whether loving God *with* ALL *our heart* is calculated to render "the particular affections to every purpose of virtue, useless, and even pernicious?" And once more, whether that act of the mind which is compatible with a rejection of what the divine oracle thus requires, can in any propriety of language, among christians, be termed virtuous?

15. "To allege," Mr. H. observes, "that the *general good* is promoted by them, will be no advantage to the defence of this system." We apprehend he means, that some may be disposed to allow that the private affections, *though not virtuous*, may yet promote the general good, on some other account. But the objector is under a mistake if he supposes, as he apparently does, that Mr. E. held any notion of true virtue which will admit no private or "particular affection" to be virtuous. In fact, the system explained in this Dissertation excludes *no* particular affection; but fully admits that *any*, yea, that *all* of them *may* be virtuous, by a proper direction. Supreme love to God, or attachment to universal being, is

or eligibleness in things not for themselves, but for something else, is not beauty. But when a form or quality appears lovely, pleasing and delightful *in itself*, then it is called *beautiful;* and this agreeableness or gratefulness of the idea is BEAUTY. It is evident that the way we come by the idea of beauty is by immediate sensation of the gratefulness of the idea called *beautiful;* and not by finding out by argumentation any consequences, or other things with which it stands connected; any more than tasting the sweetness of honey, or perceiving the harmony of a tune, is by argumentation on connections and consequences. The *manner* of being affected with the immediate presence of the beautiful idea, depends not on any reasonings about the idea after we have it, before we can find out

virtue *per se;* but any other affection, however public or private, particular or general, is a virtue only *relatively;* that is, only so far as it is a *tendency* to universal being. When the affection *terminates* on any *particular* object, without any *relation in its tendency* to universal existence, it is not a mean of ultimate happiness in itself commendable, and therefore is not virtuous.

16. "We have no dispute," says Mr. H. "respecting what is the ultimate end of virtue—the question is, What is *virtue itself?*" Very true; what is it? We say a love, an attachment, or a *tendency* of mind, to general or universal existence; whatever be the *immediate* object of the will or affections If the affection be, for instance, that of a parent to a child, however strong in its operation, it is no farther truly virtuous, than there is a regard to God in it; or, a tendency to general being. But what is *virtue itself*, according to Mr H.? The answer is not given. Had Mr. H. thought proper to give us a definition of virtue, we might compare notes, and form an estimate. It is much easier to find fault than to amend it; but this we feel disposed to promise, that if the objector produce what he thinks a better definition than what he opposes, we will endeavour to examine it with impartiality.

17. Mr. H. supposes that the auther of the work entitled "Political Justice," was "indebted to Mr. EDWARDS for his principal arguments against the private affections." Surely that author must possess a most perverse kind of ingenuity, who could deduce any thing from the works of President EDWARDS *against* the private affections. Such ingenuity as an infidel sometimes employs, when he is indebted to the writers of the old or new testament for his principal arguments *against* religion, and in favour of infidelity.

18. "A mistaken pursuit of simplicity," Mr. H. supposes, attaches to this system, whereby its advocates "place virtue *exclusively* in some one disposition of mind." We conceive there is just as much propriety in this remark as in the following: A mistaken pursuit of simplicity led a certain writer to place *conformity to law* "exclusively" in some *one disposition* of mind, where he says, that the law is fulfilled in one word, LOVE We are not aware that it is a matter of doubt, whether moral acts, and consequently virtue, proceed from the *will*, or the *heart?* And, as *every* exercise of will or affection is not virtuous, it requires no long "pursuit of simplicity" to determine that the virtuous character of the affection must arise from its *nature*, rather than its *degree;* and from its being directed to a *worthy*, rather than an *unworthy* object.

19. Mr. H. illustrates his meaning by two kinds of attraction; and so does Mr E. illustrate his Private affections, or instincts, irrespective of their virtuous quality, may be represented by the attraction of *cohesion*, whereby the several parts of individual bodies are held in contact. A truly virtuous affection may be represented by the attraction of *gravitation*, which maintains the union of bodies themselves with the general system. And, "though the union in the former case is much more *intimate* than in the latter," and "each is equally essential to the order of the world:" yet *private affections*, irrespective of their tendency to God, can with no more propriety be respected as *virtues* than *cohesion* can be termed *gravitation*. —W.

whether it be beautiful or not; but on the *frame of our minds*, whereby they are so made that such an idea, as soon as we have it, is grateful, or appears beautiful.

Therefore, if this be all that is meant by them who affirm that virtue is founded in *sentiment*, and not in *reason*, that they who see the beauty of true virtue do not perceive it by argumentation on its connections and consequences, but by the *frame of their own minds*, or a certain *spiritual sense* given them of God—whereby they *immediately* perceive pleasure in the presence of the idea of true virtue in their minds, or are *directly* gratified in the view or contemplation of this object—this is certainly true. But if thereby be meant, that the frame of mind, or inward sense given them by God, whereby the mind is disposed to delight in the idea of true virtue, is given *arbitrarily*, so that if he had pleased he might have given a contrary sense and determination of mind, which would have agreed as well with the necessary nature of things, this I think is not true.

Virtue, as I have observed, consists in the cordial consent or union of being to being in general. And that frame of mind, whereby it is disposed to *relish* and be *pleased* with the view of this, is benevolence or union of heart to being in general; or it is an universally benevolent frame of mind. Because he whose temper is to love being in general, must therein have a disposition to approve and be pleased with love to being in general. Therefore now the question is, Whether God, in giving this temper to a created mind, acts so arbitrarily, that there is nothing in the necessary nature of things to hinder, but that a *contrary* temper might have agreed or consisted as well with that nature of things as this?

And in the *first* place, to assert this would be a plain absurdity, and contrary to the very supposition. For here it is supposed, that virtue in its very essence consists in agreement or consent of being to being. Now certainly agreement itself to being in general must necessarily agree better with general existence, than opposition and contrariety to it.

I observe, *secondly*, that God in giving to the creature such a temper of mind, gives that which is agreeable to what is by absolute necessity his *own* temper and nature. For, as observed, God himself is in effect being in general; and without all doubt it is in itself necessary, that God should agree with himself, be united with himself, or love himself: and therefore, when he gives the same temper to his creatures, this is more agreeable to his necessary nature, than the opposite temper: yea, the latter would be infinitely contrary to his nature.

Let it be noted, *thirdly*, that by this temper only can created beings be united to, and agree with one another. This appears because it consists in consent and union to being in general; which implies agreement and union with every particular being,

except in such cases wherein union with them is by some means inconsistent with union to general existence. But certainly, if any particular created being were of a temper to oppose being in general, that would infer the most universal and greatest possible discord, not only of creatures with their Creator, but of created beings one with another.

Fourthly, There is no other temper but this, whereby a man can agree with himself, or be without self-inconsistence, *i. e.* without having some inclinations and relishes repugnant to others; and that for these reasons. Every being that has understanding and will, necessarily loves happiness. For to suppose any being not to love happiness, would be to suppose he did not love what was agreeable to him; which is a contradiction: or at least would imply, that nothing was agreeable or eligible to him, which is the same as to say that he has no such thing as choice, or any faculty of will. So that every being who has a faculty of will, must of necessity have an inclination to happiness. And therefore, if he be consistent with himself, and has not some inclinations repugnant to others, he must approve of those inclinations whereby beings desire the happiness of being in general, and must be against a disposition to the misery of being in general: because otherwise he would approve of opposition to his own happiness. For if a temper inclined to the misery of being in general prevailed universally, it is apparent, it would tend to universal misery. But he that loves a tendency to *universal* misery, in effect loves a tendency to his *own* misery: and as he necessarily hates his own misery, he has then one inclination repugnant to another. And besides, it necessarily follows from self-love, that men love to be loved by others; because in this others' love agrees with their own love. But if men loved hatred to being in general, they would in effect love the hatred of *themselves;* and so would be inconsistent with themselves, having one natural inclination contrary to another.

These things may help us to understand *why* that spiritual and divine sense, by which those who are truly virtuous and holy perceive the excellency of true virtue, is in the sacred scriptures called by the name of light, knowledge, understanding, &c. If this divine sense were a thing arbitrarily given, without any foundation in the nature of things, it would not properly be called by such names. For if there were no correspondence or agreement in such a sense with the nature of things, any more than there would have been in a contrary sense, the idea we obtain by this spiritual sense could in no respect be said to be a *knowledge* or perception of any thing besides what was in our own minds. For this idea would be no representation of any thing without. But since it is agreeable, in the respects abovementioned, to the nature of things; and especially since

it is the representation of the moral perfection and excellency of the divine Being; hereby we have a perception of that moral excellency, of which we could have no true idea without it. And hereby persons have that true *knowledge of God*, which greatly enlightens the mind in the knowledge of divine things in general, and which, as might be shewn if it were necessary to the main purpose of this discourse, in many respects assists persons to a right understanding of *things in general*; *viz.* to see the nature and truth of them, in their proper evidence. Whereas, the want of this spiritual sense, and the prevalence of those dispositions which are contrary to it, tends to darken and distract the mind, and dreadfully to delude and confound men's understandings.

Nor can that *moral sense* common to mankind, which there is in *natural conscience*, be truly said to be no more than a *sentiment*, *arbitrarily* given by the Creator, without any relation to the necessary nature of things: but rather this is established in *agreement* with the nature of things; so established, as no sense of mind that can be supposed of a *contrary* nature and tendency could be. This will appear by these two things:

1. This moral sense—if the understanding be well informed, exercised at liberty, and in an extensive manner, without being restrained to a private sphere—approves the very *same* things which a spiritual and divine sense approves; and those things only; though not not on the same *grounds*, nor with the same kind of approbation. Therefore, as that *divine* sense is agreeable to the necessary nature of things, as already shewn so this *inferior moral* sense, being so far correspondent to that' must also so far agree with the nature of things.

2. It has been shewn, that this moral sense consists in approving the uniformity and natural agreement there is between one thing and another. So that, by the supposition, it is agreeable to the nature of things. For therein it consists, *viz.* a disposition of mind to consent to or like, the agreement of the nature of things, or the agreement of the nature and form of one thing with another. And certainly, such a temper of mind is more agreeable to the nature of things than an opposite temper.

The use of *language* is to express our SENTIMENTS, or ideas, to each other; so that those terms by which things of a moral nature are signified, express those moral *sentiments* which are common to mankind. Therefore, that MORAL SENSE which in its natural conscience, chiefly *governs* the use of language, and is the mind's *rule* of language in these matters. It is indeed the *general natural rule* which God has given to all men, whereby to judge of moral good and evil. By such words, *right* and *wrong*, *good* and *evil*, when used in a moral

sense, is meant in common speech, that which deserves *praise* or *blame*, *respect* or *resentment*; and mankind in general have a sense of *desert*, by this natural *moral sense*.

Therefore here is a question which may deserve to be considered: Seeing *sentiment* is the *rule* of language, as to what is called *good* and *evil*, *worthy* and *unworthy*; and it is apparent that sentiment, at least as to many particulars, is different in different persons, especially in different nations—that being thought to deserve praise by *one*, which by others is thought to be worthy of blame—how therefore can virtue and vice be any other than *arbitrary*; not at all determined by the *nature* of things, but by the *sentiments* of men with relation to the nature of things?

In order to the answering of this question with clearness, it may be divided into two: *viz.* Whether men's sentiments of moral good and evil are casual and accidental? And, whether their way of using words in what they call good and evil, is not *arbitrary*, without respect to any common sentiment conformed to the nature of things?

As to the *first* I would observe that the *general* disposition or sense of mind, exercised in a sense of desert of esteem or resentment, may be the same in all: though as to *particular* objects and occasions with regard to which it is exercised, it may be very various in different men or bodies of men, through the partiality or error that may attend the view or attention of the mind. In all a notion of *desert* of love or resentment, may consist in the same thing in general—a suitableness, or natural uniformity and agreement between the affections and acts of the agent, and the affection and treatment of others some way concerned—and yet *occasions* and *objects* through a variety of apprehensions about them, and the various *manner* in which they are viewed, by reason of the partial attention of the mind, may be extremely various. Besides, example, custom, education, and association, may contribute to this, in ways innumerable. But it is needless to enlarge here, since what has been said by others, Mr. Hutchison in particular, may abundantly shew, that the differences which are to be found among different persons and nations concerning moral good and evil, are not inconsistent with a general *moral sense*, common to all mankind.

Nor, *secondly*, is the use of the words, *good* and *evil*, *right* and *wrong*, when used in a moral sense, altogether unfixed and arbitrary, according to the variety of notions, opinions and views, that occasion the forementioned variety of sentiment. For though the signification of words is determined by particular use, yet that which *governs* in the use of terms, is *general* or common use. And mankind, in what they would signify by terms, are obliged to aim at a *consistent* use; because it is

easily found that the end of language, which is to be a common medium of manifesting ideas and sentiments, cannot be obtained any other way than by a consistent use of words; both that men should be consistent with themselves, and one with another, in the use of them. But men cannot call any thing right or wrong, worthy or ill-deserving, consistently, any other way than by calling things so, which truly deserve praise or blame. i. e. things wherein, all things considered, there is most uniformity in connecting with them praise or blame. There is no other way in which they can use these terms consistently with themselves. Thus if thieves or traitors may be angry with informers that bring them to justice, and call their behaviour by odious names; yet herein they are inconsistent with themselves; because when they put themselves in the place of those who have injured them, they approve the same things they condemn. And therefore, such are capable of being convinced, that they apply these odious terms in an abusive manner. So a nation that prosecutes an ambitious design of universal empire, by subduing other nations with fire and sword, may affix terms that signify the highest degrees of virtue, to the conduct of such as shew the most engaged, stable, resolute spirit in this affair, and do most of this bloody work. But yet they are capable of being convinced that they use these terms inconsistently, and abuse language in it, and so having their mouths stopped. And not only will men use such words inconsistently with themselves but also with one another, by using them any otherwise than to signify true merit or ill deserving, as before explained. For there is no way else wherein men have any notion of good or ill desert, in which mankind in general can agree. Mankind in general seem to suppose some *general standard*, or foundation in *nature*, for an universal consistence in the use of the terms whereby they express moral good and evil; which none can depart from but through error and mistake. This is evidently supposed in all their *disputes* about *right* and *wrong;* and in all *endeavours* used to prove *that any* thing is either *good* or *evil*, in a moral sense.

A HISTORY

OF

THE WORK OF REDEMPTION,

CONTAINING THE

OUTLINES OF A BODY OF DIVINITY,

INCLUDING

A VIEW OF CHURCH HISTORY,

IN A METHOD ENTIRELY NEW.

PREFACE.

It has long been desired by the friends of Mr. Edwards, that a number of his manuscripts should be published; but the disadvantage under which all posthumous publications must necessarily appear, and the difficulty of getting any considerable work printed in this infant country hitherto, have proved sufficient obstacles to the execution of such a proposal. The first of these obstacles made me doubt for a considerable time after these manuscripts came into my hands, whether I could consistently with that regard which I owe to the honour of so worthy a parent, suffer any of them to appear in the world. However, being diffident of my own sentiments, and doubtful whether I were not over-jealous in this matter, I determined to submit to the opinion of gentlemen, who are friends both to the character of Mr. Edwards and to the cause of truth. The consequence was, that they gave their advice for publishing them.

The other obstacle was removed by a gentleman in the Church of Scotland, who was formerly a correspondent of Mr. Edwards. He engaged a bookseller to undertake the work, and also signified his desire that these following discourses in particular might be made public.

Mr. Edwards had planned a body of divinity, in a new method, and in the form of a history; in which he was first to shew how the most remarkable events in all ages from the fall to the present times, recorded in sacred and profane history, were adapted to promote the work of redemption; and then to trace, by the light of scripture-prophecy, how the same work should be yet further carried on even to the end of the world. His heart was so much set on executing this plan, that he was considerably averse to accept the presidentship of Prince-town college, lest the duties of that office should put it out of his power.

The outlines of that work are now offered to the public, as contained in a series of sermons, preached at Northampton in 1739,* without any view to publication. On that account, the reader cannot reasonably expect all that from them, which he might justly have expected, had they been written with such a view, and prepared by the author's own hand for the press.

* This is necessary to be remembered by the reader, in order to understand some chronological observations in the following work.

As to elegance of composition, which is now esteemed so essential to all publications, it is well known that the author did not make that his chief study. However, his other writings, though destitute of the ornaments of fine language, have it seems solid merit, which has procured both to themselves and to him a considerable reputation in the world, and with many, a high esteem. It is hoped that the reader will find in these discourses many traces of plain good sense, sound reasoning and thorough knowledge of the sacred oracles and real unfeigned piety: and that, as the plan is new and many of the sentiments uncommon, they may afford entertainment and improvement to the ingenious, the inquisitive, and the pious reader; may confirm their faith in God's government of the world, in our holy Christian religion in general, and in many of its peculiar doctrines; may assist in studying with greater pleasure and advantage the historical and prophetical books of scripture; and may excite to a conversation becoming the gospel.

That this volume may produce these happy effects in all who shall peruse it, is the hearty desire and prayer of

The reader's most humble servant,

JONATHAN EDWARDS.

Newhaven, Feb. 25, 1773.

ADVERTISEMENT.

They who have a relish for the study of the scriptures, and have access to peruse the following sheets, will, I am persuaded, deem themselves indebted to the Rev. Mr. Edwards of Newhaven, for consenting to publish them. Though the acute philosopher and deep divine appears in them, yet they are in the general better calculated for the instruction and improvement of ordinary Christians, than those of President Edwards's writings, where the abstruse nature of the subject, or the subtle objections of opposers of the truth, led him to more abstract and metaphysical reasonings. The manuscript being intrusted to my care, I have not presumed to make any change in the sentiments or composition. I have, however, taken the liberty to reduce it from the form of sermons, which it originally bore, to that of a continued treatise; and I have so altered and diversified the marks of the several divisions and subdivisions, that each class of heads might be easily distinguished.

JOHN ERSKINE.

Edinburgh, April 29, 1774.

A HISTORY

OF THE

WORK OF REDEMPTION.

General Introduction.

Isaiah li. 8.

For the moth shall eat them up like a garment, and the worm shall eat them like wool: but my righteousness shall be for ever, and my salvation from generation to generation.

The design of this chapter is to comfort the Church under her sufferings, and the persecutions of her enemies; and the argument of consolation insisted on, is the constancy and perpetuity of God's mercy and faithfulness towards her, which shall be manifest in continuing to work salvation for her, protecting her against all assaults of her enemies, and carrying her safely through all the changes of the world, and finally, crowning her with victory and deliverance.

In the text, this happiness of the church of God is set forth by comparing it with the contrary fate of her enemies that oppress her: And therein we may observe,

I. How short lived the power and prosperity of the church's enemies is: "The moth shall eat them up like a garment, and the worm shall eat them like wool;" i. e. however great their prosperity is, and however great their present glory, they shall by degrees consume and vanish away by a secret curse of God, till they come to nothing; and all their power and glory, and so their persecutions, eternally cease, and they be finally and irrecoverably ruined: as the finest and most glorious apparel will in time wear away, and be consumed by moths and rottenness. We learn who those are that shall thus consume away, by the foregoing verse, viz. those that are the

enemies of God's people: "Hearken unto me, ye that know righteousness, the people in whose heart is my law, fear ye not the reproach of men, neither be ye afraid of their revilings."

II. The contrary happy lot and portion of God's church; expressed in these words, "My righteousness shall be for ever, and my salvation from generation to generation." Who shall have the benefit of this we also learn by the preceding verse, viz. They *that know righteousness*, and *the people in whose heart is God's law:* or, in one word, the church of God. And concerning their happiness, we may observe, wherein it consists; in its continuance.

1. Wherein it CONSISTS; viz. In God's righteousness and salvation towards them. By God's righteousness here is meant his faithfulness in fulfilling his covenant-promises to his church, or, his faithfulness towards his church and people, in bestowing the benefits of the covenant of grace upon them. Though these benefits are bestowed of free and sovereign grace, as being altogether undeserved; yet as God has been pleased, by the promises of the covenant of grace, to bind himself to bestow them, they are bestowed in the exercise of God's righteousness or justice. And therefore the apostle says, Heb. vi. 10. "God is not unrighteous, to forget your work and labour of love." And, 1 John, i. 9. "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." So the word *righteousness* is very often used in scripture for God's covenant-faithfulness; as in Nehem. ix. 8. "Thou hast performed thy words, for thou art righteous." So we are often to understand righteousness and covenant-mercy for the same thing; as Psal. xxiv. 5. "He shall receive the blessing from the Lord, and righteousness from the God of his salvation." Psalm xxxvi. 10. "Continue thy loving-kindness to them that know thee, and thy righteousness to the upright in heart." And Psal. li. 14. "Deliver me from blood-guiltiness, O God, thou God of my salvation; and my tongue shall sing aloud of thy righteousness." Dan. ix. 16. "O Lord, according to thy righteousness, I beseech thee, let thine anger and thy fury be turned away:—And so in innumerable other places.

The other word here used is *salvation*. Of these two, God's righteousness and his salvation, the one is the cause, of which the other is the effect. God's righteousness, or covenant-mercy, is the root, of which his salvation is the fruit. Both of them relate to the covenant of grace. The one is God's covenant-mercy and faithfulness, the other intends that work of God by which this covenant-mercy is accomplished in the fruits of it. For salvation is the sum of all those works of God by which the benefits that are by the covenant of grace are procured and bestowed.

2. We may observe its *continuance*, signified here by two expressions, *for ever*, and *from generation to generation;* the latter seems to be explanatory of the former. The phrase *for ever*, is variously used in scripture. Sometimes thereby is meant *as long as a man lives.* It is said, that the servant who had his ear bored through with an awl to the door of his master, should be his *for ever.* Sometimes thereby is meant during the *continuance of the Jewish state.* Of many of the ceremonial and Levitical laws it is said that they should be statutes *for ever.* Sometimes it means *as long as the world shall stand*, or to the end of the generations of men. Thus Eccles. i. 4. "One generation passeth away, and another cometh; but the earth abideth for ever." Sometimes thereby is meant *to all eternity.* So it is said, "God is blessed for ever," Rom. i. 25. And so it is said John vi. 51. "If any man eat of this bread, he shall live *for ever.*"—And which of these senses is here to be understood, the next words determine, viz. *to the end of the world*, or to the end of the generations of men. It is said in the next words, "and my salvation *from generation to generation.*" Indeed the *fruits* of God's salvation shall remain after the end of the world, as appears by the 6th verse: "Lift up your eyes to the heavens, and look upon the earth beneath: for the heavens shall vanish away like smoke, and the earth shall wax old like a garment, and they that dwell therein shall die in like manner, but my salvation shall be for ever, and my righteousness shall not be abolished." But the work of salvation itself toward the church shall continue to be wrought till then: till the end of the world God will go on to accomplish deliverance and salvation for the church, from all her enemies: for that is what the prophet is here speaking of. *Till the end of the world*, till her enemies cease to be, as to any power to molest the church. And this expression, *from generation to generation*, may determine us as to the time which God continues to carry on the work of salvation for his church, both with respect to the beginning and end. It is from generation to generation, *i. e.* throughout all generations; beginning with the generations of men on the earth, and not ending till those generations end.—And therefore we deduce from these words this

DOCTRINE.

The work of redemption is a work that God carries on from the fall of man to the end of the world.

The generations of mankind on the earth which began after the fall, by ordinary generation, are partakers of the

corruption of nature that followed from it; and these generations, by which the human race is propagated, shall continue to the end of the world. These two are the limits of the generations of men on the earth; the fall of man, and the end of the world, or the day of judgment. The same are the limits of the work of redemption, as to those progressive works of God, by which that redemption is brought about and accomplished, though not as to the *fruits* of it; for they shall be to eternity.

The work of redemption and the work of salvation are the same thing. What is sometimes in scripture called God's *saving* his people, is in other places called his *redeeming* them. So Christ is called both the *Saviour* and the *Redeemer* of his people.

BEFORE entering on the proposed History of the Work of Redemption, I would explain the *terms* made use of in the doctrine;—and show what those *things* are that are designed to be accomplished by this great work of God.

FIRST. I would show in what sense the TERMS of the doctrine are used;—particularly the word *redemption*;—and, how this is a work of God, carried on from the fall of man to the end of the world.

I. The use of the word *redemption*.—And here it may be observed, that the work of redemption is sometimes understood in a more *limited* sense, for the *purchase* of salvation; for the word strictly signifies, a purchase of deliverance. If we take the word in this *restrained* sense, the work of redemption was not so long in doing: but was begun and finished with Christ's humiliation. It was begun with Christ's incarnation, carried on through his life, and finished with the time of his remaining under the power of death, which ended in his resurrection. And so we say, that on the day of his resurrection Christ finished the work of redemption, *i. e.* then the purchase was finished, and the work itself, and all that appertained to it, was *virtually* done and finished, but not *actually*.

But sometimes the work of redemption is taken more *largely*, as including all that God accomplishes tending to this end; not only the purchase itself, but also all God's works that were properly preparatory to the purchase, and accomplishing the success of it. So that the whole dispensation, as it includes the preparation and purchase, the application and success of Christ's redemption, is here called the work of *redemption*; all that Christ does in this great affair as mediator, in any of his offices, either of prophet, priest, and king; either when he was in this world, in his human nature, or before or since. And it includes not only what Christ the

mediator has done, but also what the Father or the Holy Ghost, has done, as united or confederated in this design of redeeming sinful men: or in one word, all that is wrought in execution of the eternal covenant of redemption. This is what I call the work of redemption in the *doctrine;* for it is all but one work, one design. The various dispensations or works that belong to it, are but the several parts of one scheme. It is but one design that is formed, to which all the offices of Christ directly tend, and in which all the persons of the Trinity conspire. All the various dispensations that belong to it are united; and the several wheels are one machine, to answer one end, and produce one effect.

II. When I say, this work is *carried on* from the fall of man to the end of the world; in order to the full understanding of my meaning in it, I would desire two or three things to be observed.

1. That it is not meant, that nothing was done in order to it *before* the fall of man. Some things were done before the world was created, yea from eternity. The persons of the Trinity were, as it were, confederated in a design, and a covenant of redemption. In this covenant the Father had appointed the Son, and the Son had undertaken the work; and all things to be accomplished in the work were stipulated and agreed. There were things done at the *creation* of the world, in order to that work; for the world itself seems to have been created in order to it. The work of creation was in order to God's work of providence. So that if it be inquired, which are greatest, the works of creation or those of providence; I answer, the works of providence; because those of providence are the *end* of the works of creation; as the building of a house, or the forming of a machine, is for its *use.* But God's main work of providence is this of redemption, as will more fully appear hereafter.

The creation of heaven was in order to the work of redemption; as an habitation for the redeemed; Matth. xxv. 34. "Then shall the King say unto them on his right. Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." Even the *angels* were created to be employed in this work. And therefore the apostle calls them, *ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation:* Heb. i. 14. As to this *lower world,* it was doubtless created to be a stage upon which this great and wonderful work of redemption should be transacted: and therefore, as might be shown in many respects, this lower world is wisely fitted, in its formation, for such a state of man as he is in since the fall, under a possibility of redemption. So that when it is said, that the work of redemption is carried on from the fall of man to the end of the world, it is not meant, that all

that ever was done in order to redemption has been done since the fall. Nor,

2. Is it meant that there will be no remaining fruits of this work *after* the end of the world. That glory and blessedness that will be the sum of all the fruits, will remain to all the saints for ever. The work of redemption is not a work always doing and never accomplished. The *fruits* of it are eternal, but the *work* has an issue. In the issue the end will be obtained; which end will last for ever. As those things which were in order to this work—God's electing love, and the covenant of redemption—never had a beginning; so the fruits of this work never will have an end. And therefore,

3. When it is said in the doctrine, that this is a work that God is *carrying on* from the fall of man to the end of the world, what I mean is, that those things which belong to this work itself, and are parts of the scheme, are all this while accomplishing. There were some things done preparatory to its beginning, and the fruits of it will remain after it is finished. But the work itself was begun immediately upon the fall, and will continue to the end of the world. The various dispensations of God during this space belong to the same work, and to the same design, and have all one issue; and therefore are all to be reckoned but as several successive motions of one machine to bring about in the conclusion one great event.

And here also we must distinguish between the parts of *redemption* itself, and the parts of the *work* by which that redemption is wrought out. There is a difference between the parts of the *benefits*, and the parts of the *work* of God by which those benefits were procured and bestowed. For example, the redemption of Israel out of Egypt, considered as the benefit which they enjoyed, consisted of two parts, viz. their deliverance from their former Egyptian bondage and misery, and their being brought into a more happy state, as the servants of God, and heirs of Canaan. But there are many more things which are *parts* of that work. To this belongs his calling of Moses, his sending him to Pharaoh, and all the signs and wonders he wrought in Egypt, and his bringing such terrible judgments on the Egyptians, and many other things.

Such is this work by which God effects redemption, and it is carried on from the fall of man to the end of the world, in two respects.

1. With respect to the *effect* wrought on the souls of the redeemed; which is common to all ages. This effect is the application of redemption with respect to the souls of particular persons, in converting, justifying, sanctifying, and glorifying them. By these things they are actually redeemed, and receive the benefit of the work in its effects. And in this

sense the work of redemption is carried on in all ages, from the fall of man to the end of the world. The work of God in converting souls, opening blind eyes, unstopping deaf ears, raising dead souls to life, and rescuing the miserable captives out of the hands of Satan, was begun soon after the fall of man, has been carried on in the world ever since, to this day, and will be to the end of the world. God has always had such a church in the world. Though oftentimes it has been reduced to a very narrow compass, and to low circumstances; yet it has never wholly failed.

And as God carries on the work of converting the souls of fallen men through all ages, so he goes on to justify them, to blot out all their sins, and to accept them as righteous in his sight, through the righteousness of Christ. He goes on to adopt and receive them from being the children of Satan, to be his own children, to carry on the work of his grace which he has begun in them, to comfort them with the consolations of his Spirit, and to bestow upon them, when their bodies die, that eternal glory which is the fruit of Christ's purchase. What is said, Rom. viii. 30. "Whom he did predestinate, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified;"—is applicable to all ages, from the fall to the end of the world.

And the way of effecting this, is carried on by repeating continually the same work over again, though in different persons, from age to age. But,

2. The work of redemption with respect to the grand design in general, as it respects the universal subject and end, is carried on—not merely by repeating or renewing the same effect in the different subjects of it, but—by many successive works and dispensations of God, all tending to one great effect, united as the several parts of a scheme, and altogether making up one great work. Like a temple that is building; first the workmen are sent forth, then the materials are gathered, the ground is fitted, and the foundation laid; then the superstructure is erected, one part after another, till at length the top-stone is laid, and all is finished. Now the work of redemption in this large sense, may be compared to such a building. God began it immediately after the fall, and will proceed to the end of the world. Then shall the top-stone be brought forth, and all will appear complete and glorious.

This work is carried on in the *former* respect as being an effect common to all ages; and in the *latter* respect the grand design in general, not only by that which is common to all ages, but by successive works wrought in different ages. All are parts of one great scheme, whereby one work is brought about by various steps, one step in one age, and another in another. It is this last that I shall chiefly insist upon, though

not excluding the former; for one necessarily supposes the other.

Having thus explained what I mean by the *terms* of the doctrine; I now proceed,

Secondly, to show what is the *design* of this great work, or what *things* are designed to be accomplished by it. In order to see how any design is carried on, we must first know what it is. To know, for instance, how a workman proceeds, and to understand the various steps he takes in order to accomplish a piece of work, we need to be informed what he *intends* to accomplish; otherwise we may stand by, seeing him do one thing after another, and be quite puzzled, because we see nothing of his scheme. Suppose an architect, with a great number of hands, were building some great palace; and one that was a stranger to such things should stand by, and see some men digging in the earth, others bringing timber, others hewing stones, and the like; he might see that there was a great deal done, but if he knew not the *design*, it would all appear to him confusion. And therefore, that the great works and dispensations of God which belong to this great affair of redemption may not appear like confusion to you, I would set before you briefly the *main things* designed to be accomplished.

I. It is to put all God's enemies under his feet, and that his goodness may finally appear triumphant over all evil. Soon after the world was created, evil entered into the world in the fall of the angels and man. Presently after God had made rational creatures, there were enemies who rose up against him from among them; and in the fall of man evil entered into this lower world; where also God's enemies rose up against him. Satan endeavoured to frustrate his design in the creation of this lower world, to destroy his workmanship, to wrest the government of it out of his hands, to usurp the throne, and set up himself as the God of this world, instead of him who made it. To these ends he introduced sin into the world; and having made man God's enemy, he introduced guilt, and death, and the most dreadful misery.

Now one great design of God, in the affair of redemption, was to subdue those enemies. 1 Cor. xv. 25. "He must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet." Things were originally so planned, that he might disappoint, confound, and triumph over Satan; and that he might be bruised under Christ's feet, Gen. iii. 15. The promise was given, that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head. It was a part of God's original design in this work, to destroy the works of the devil, and confound him in all his purposes: 1 John. iii. 8. "For this purpose was the Son of God manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil." It was a part of his design to triumph over sin, and over the corruptions

of men, and to root them out of the hearts of his people, by conforming them to himself. He designed also that his grace should triumph over man's guilt, and sin's infinite demerit. Again, it was a part of his design to triumph over death; and however this is the last enemy that shall be destroyed, yet that shall finally be vanquished and destroyed. Thus God appears glorious above all evil, and triumphant over all his enemies by the work of redemption.

II. God's design was perfectly to restore all the ruins of the fall, so far as concerns the elect part of the world, by his Son; and therefore we read of the *restitution of all things*, Acts iii. 21. "Whom the heaven must receive, until the times of the restitution of all things; and of the times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord Jesus." Acts iii. 19. "Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord."

Man's *soul* was ruined by the fall; the image of God was defaced; man's nature was corrupted, and he became dead in sin. The design of God was to restore the soul of man to life, and the divine image in conversion, to carry on the change in sanctification, and to perfect it in glory. Man's body was ruined; by the fall it became subject to death. The design of God was to restore it from this ruin, and not only to deliver it from death in the resurrection, but to deliver it from mortality itself, in making it like unto Christ's glorious body. The *world* was ruined, as to man, as effectually as if it had been reduced to *chaos* again; all heaven and earth were overthrown. But the design of God was to restore all, and as it were to create a new heaven and a new earth: Is. lxv. 17. "Behold, I create new heavens, and a new earth; and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind." 2 Pet. iii. 13. "Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens, and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness."

The work by which this was to be done was begun immediately after the fall, and so is carried on till all is finished, when the whole world, heaven and earth, shall be restored. There shall be, as it were, new heavens, and a new earth, in a spiritual sense, at the end of the world. Thus it is represented, Rev. xxi. 1. "And I saw a new heaven, and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away."

III. Another great design of God in the work of redemption, was to gather together in one all things in Christ, in heaven and in earth, *i. e.* all elect creatures; to bring all elect creatures, in heaven and in earth, to an union one to another in one body, under one head, and to unite all together in one body to God the Father. This was begun soon after the fall, and is carried on through all ages, and shall be finished at the end of the world.

IV. God designed by this work to perfect and complete the *glory* of all the elect by Christ—glory, "such as eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor has ever entered into the heart of man." He intended to bring them to perfect excellency and beauty in his holy image, which is the proper beauty of spiritual beings; and to advance them to a glorious degree of honour, and raise them to an ineffable height of pleasure and joy. Thus he designed to glorify the whole church of elect men in soul and body, and with them to bring the glory of the elect angels to its highest elevation under one head.

V. In all this God designed to accomplish the glory of the blessed Trinity in an eminent degree. God had a design of glorifying himself from eternity; yea, to glorify each person in the Godhead. The *end* must be considered as first in order of nature, and then the means; and therefore we must conceive, that God having professed this end, had then as it were the means to choose; and the principal mean that he adopted was this great work of redemption. It was his design in this work to glorify his only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ; and by the Son to glorify the Father: John xiii. 31, 32. "Now is the Son of man glorified, and God is glorified in him. If God be glorified in him, God shall also glorify him in himself, and shall straightway glorify him." It was his design that the Son should thus be glorified, and should glorify the Father by what should be accomplished by the Spirit to the glory of the Spirit that the whole Trinity conjunctly, and each person singly, might be exceedingly glorified. The work that was the appointed means of this, was begun immediately after the fall, and is carried on till, and finished at the end of the world, when all this intended glory shall be fully accomplished in all things.

Having thus explained the *terms* in the doctrine, and shown what *things* are to be accomplished by this great work of God, I proceed now to the proposed History; that is, to show how what was designed by the work of redemption has been accomplished, in the *various steps* of this work, from the fall of man to the end of the world.

In order to this, I would divide this whole space of time into three periods:—the

1st, reaching from the fall of man to the incarnation of Christ;—the

2d, from Christ's incarnation till his resurrection; or the whole time of Christ's humiliation;—the

3d, from thence to the end of the world.

Some may be ready to think this a very unequal division; and so indeed it is in some respects, because the second period, although so much shorter than either of the other—

being but between thirty and forty years, whereas both the other contain thousands—in this affair is more than both the others,—I would therefore proceed to show distinctly how the work of redemption is carried on through each of these periods in their order, under three propositions.

I. That from the fall of man to the incarnation of Christ, God was doing those things which were preparatory to his coming, as forerunners and earnests of it.

II. That the time from Christ's incarnation to his resurrection, was spent in procuring and purchasing redemption.

III. That the space of time from the resurrection of Christ to the end of the world, is all taken up in bringing about or accomplishing the great effect or success of that purpose.

In a particular consideration of these three propositions, the great truth taught in the doctrine may perhaps appear in a clear light.

PERIOD I.

From the Fall to the Incarnation.

The great works of God in the world, during this whole space of time, were all preparatory. There were many great changes and revolutions in the world, and they were all only the turning of the wheels of providence to make way for the coming of Christ, and what he was to do in the world. Hither tended especially all God's great works towards his church. The church was under various dispensations of providence, and in very various circumstances, before Christ came; but all these dispensations were to prepare the way for his coming. God wrought salvation for the souls of men through all that space of time, though the number was very small to what it was afterwards; and all this was by way of anticipation. All the souls that were saved before Christ came, were only the earnests of the future harvest.

God wrought many deliverances for his church and people before Christ came; but these were only so many images and forerunners of the great salvation. The church during that space of time enjoyed the light of divine revelation. They had in a degree the light of the gospel. But all these revelations were only so many earnests of the great light that he should bring who came to be the light of the world. That whole space of time was the time of night, wherein the church of God was not indeed wholly without light; but it was like the light of the moon and stars; a dim light in comparison of

the light of the sun, and mixed with a great deal of darkness. It had no glory by reason of the glory that excelleth, 2 Cor. iii. 10. The church had indeed the light of the sun, but it was only as reflected from the moon and stars. The church all that while was a minor. Gal. iv. 1—3. "Now I say, that the heir, as long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant, though he be lord of all; but is under tutors and governors, until the time appointed of the Father. Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world."

But here, for the greater clearness and distinctness, I shall subdivide this period into parts:

1st, From the fall to the flood.
2d, From thence to the calling of Abraham.
3d, From thence to Moses.
4th, From thence to David.
5th, From David to the captivity in Babylon.
6th, From thence to the incarnation of Christ.

PART I.

From the Fall to the Flood.

Though this period was the most distant from Christ's incarnation, yet then was this glorious building begun.

I. As soon as man fell, Christ entered on his mediatorial work. Then it was that he began to execute the work and office of a mediator. He had undertaken it before the world was made. He stood engaged with the Father to appear as man's mediator, and to take on that office when there should be occasion, from all eternity. But now the time was come. Christ the eternal Son of God clothed himself with the mediatorial character, and therein presented himself before the Father. He immediately stepped in between a holy, infinite, offended Majesty, and offending mankind. He was accepted in his interposition; and so wrath was prevented from going forth in the full execution of that amazing curse that man had brought on himself.

It is manifest that Christ began to exercise the office of *mediator* between God and man as soon as ever man fell, because mercy began to be exercised towards man immediately. There was mercy in the forbearance of God, that he did not destroy him, as he did the angels when they fell. But

there is no mercy exercised toward fallen man but through a mediator. If God had not in mercy restrained Satan, he would immediately have seized on his prey. Christ began to do the part of an *intercessor* for man as soon as he fell; for there is no mercy exercised towards man but what is obtained through Christ's intercession. From that day Christ took on him the care of the church, in the exercise of all his offices. He undertook to *teach* mankind in the exercise of his *prophetical* office: to *intercede* for fallen man in his *priestly* office; and to *govern* the church and the world as a king. He from that time took upon him the care of defending his elect church from all their enemies. When Satan, the grand enemy, had conquered and overthrown man, the business of resisting and conquering him was committed to Christ. He thenceforward undertook to manage that subtle powerful adversary. He was then appointed the Captain of the Lord's hosts, the Captain of their salvation. Henceforward this lower world, with all its concerns, devolved upon the Son of God: for when man had sinned, God the Father would have no more to do *immediately* with this world of mankind, that had apostatized from and rebelled against him. He would henceforward act only through a mediator, either in teaching men, or in governing, or bestowing any benefits on them.

And therefore, when we read in sacred history what God did, from time to time, towards his church and people, and how he revealed himself to them, we are to understand it especially of the second person of the Trinity. When we read of God appearing after the fall, in some visible form or outward symbol of his presence, we are ordinarily, if not universally, to understand it of the second person of the Trinity. John i. 18. "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him." He is therefore called "the image of the invisible God," Col. 1. 15; intimating, that though God the Father be invisible, yet Christ is his image or representation, by which he is seen.

Yea, not only this lower world devolved on Christ, that he might have the care and government of it, and order it agreeably to his design of redemption, but also in some respect the whole universe. The *angels* from that time are subject to him in his mediatorial office, as is manifest by the scripture history, wherein we have accounts of their acting as ministering spirits in the affairs of the church.

And therefore we may suppose, that immediately on the fall of Adam, it was made known in heaven among the angels, that God had a design of redemption with respect to fallen man; that Christ had now taken upon him the office and work of a mediator between God and man; and that they were to be subservient to him in this office. And as Christ, in this office, has been solemnly installed the King of heaven, and is thencefor-

ward as God-man, the Light, the Sun of heaven, (agreeable to Rev. xxi. 23.) so this revelation made in heaven among the angels, was as it were the first dawning of this light there. When Christ ascended into heaven after his passion, and was solemnly enthroned, then this sun rose in heaven, even the Lamb that is the light of the New Jerusalem.

II. Presently upon this the gospel was first revealed on earth, in these words, Gen. iii. 15. "And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed: it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." We must suppose, that God's intention of redeeming fallen man was first signified in heaven, before it was signified on earth, because the business of the angels, as ministering spirits of the mediator, required it; for as soon as ever Christ had taken on him the work of a mediator, it was requisite that the angels should be ready immediately to be subservient to him in that office: so that the light first dawned in heaven; but very soon after the same was signified on earth. In those words of God there was an intimation of another surety to be appointed for man, after the first surety had failed. This was the first revelation of the covenant of grace; the first dawning of the light of the gospel on earth.

This lower world before the fall enjoyed noon-day light; the light of the knowledge of God, the light of his glory, and the light of his favour. But when man fell, all this light was at once extinguished, and the world reduced back again to total darkness; a worse darkness than that which was in the beginning of the world, (Gen. i. 2.) "Darkness was upon the face of the deep," a darkness a thousand times more remediless than that. Neither men nor angels could find out any way whereby this darkness might be scattered. It appeared in its blackness when Adam and his wife saw that they were naked, and sewed fig-leaves; when they heard the voice of the Lord God, walking in the garden, and hid themselves among the trees. When God first called them to an account, and said to Adam, "What is that thou hast done? Hast thou eaten of the tree whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldst not eat?" Then we may suppose that their hearts were filled with shame and terror. But these words of God, (Gen. iii. 15.) were the first dawning of gospel light, after this dismal darkness. Before this there was not one glimpse of light, any beam of comfort, or the least hope. It was an obscure yet comprehensive revelation of the gospel; not indeed made to Adam or Eve directly, but contained in what God said to the serpent.

Here was a certain intimation of a merciful design by "the seed of the woman," which was like the first glimmerings of the light in the east when the day first dawns. This intima-

tion of mercy was given even before sentence was pronounced on either Adam or Eve, from tenderness to them, lest they should be overborne with a sentence of condemnation, without having any thing held forth whence they could gather any hope.

One of those great things that were intended to be done by the work of redemption, is more plainly intimated, *viz.* God subduing his enemies under the feet of his Son. God's design of this was now first declared. Satan probably had triumphed greatly in the fall of man, as though he had defeated the designs of God in his creation. But in these words God gives him a plain intimation, that he should not finally triumph, but that a complete victory and triumph should be obtained over him by the seed of the woman.

This revelation of the gospel was the first thing that Christ did in his prophetical office. From the fall of man to the incarnation of Christ, God was doing those things that were preparatory to Christ's coming to effect redemption, and were forerunners and earnests of it. And one of those things was to foretell and promise it, as he did from age to age, till Christ came. This was the first promise given, the first prediction that ever was made of it.

III. Soon after this, the custom of sacrificing was appointed, to be a standing type of the sacrifice of Christ, till he should come, and offer up himself a sacrifice to God. Sacrificing was not a custom first established by the Levitical law, for it had been a part of God's instituted worship from the beginning. We read of the patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, offering sacrifice, and before them Noah and Abel. And this was by divine appointment; for it was part of God's worship in his church, which was offered up in faith, and which he accepted. This proves that it was by his institution; for sacrificing is no part of natural worship. The light of nature doth not teach men to offer up beasts in sacrifice to God; and seeing it was not enjoined by the law of nature, to be acceptable to God, it must be by some positive command or institution; for God has declared his abhorrence of such worship as is taught by the precept of men without his institution. (Isa. xxix. 13.) And such worship as hath not a warrant from divine institution, cannot be offered up in faith, because faith has no foundation where there is no divine appointment. Men have no warrant to hope for God's acceptance, in that which is not of his appointment, and in that to which he hath not promised his acceptance: and therefore it follows, that the custom of offering sacrifices to God was instituted soon after the fall; for the scripture teaches us, that Abel offered "the firstlings of his flock, and of the fat thereof," Gen. iv. 4; and that he was accepted of God in this offering, Heb. xi. 4. And there is nothing in the story

intimating that the institution was first given when Abel offered up that sacrifice to God; but rather that Abel only complied with a custom already established.

It is very probable that sacrifice was instituted immediately after God had revealed the covenant of grace, (Gen. iii. 15,) as the foundation on which the custom of sacrificing was built. That promise was the first stone laid towards this glorious building, the work of redemption; and the next stone, the institution of sacrifices, to be a type of the *great sacrifice.*

The next thing that we have an account of, after God had pronounced sentence on the serpent, on the woman, and on the man, was, that God made them coats of skins, and clothed them; which by the generality of divines, are thought to be the skins of beasts slain in sacrifice. For we have no account of any thing else that should be the occasion of man's slaying beasts, except to offer them in sacrifice, till after the flood. Men were not wont to eat the flesh of beasts as their common food till after the flood. The first food of man before the fall, was the fruit of the trees of paradise; and after the fall, his food was the produce of the field: Gen. iii. 18. "And thou shalt eat the herb of the field." The first grant that he had to eat flesh as his common food, was after the flood: Gen. ix. 3. "Every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you; even as the green herb have I given you all things." So that it is likely that these skins with which Adam and Eve were clothed, were the skins of their sacrifices. God's clothing them with these was a lively figure of their being clothed with the righteousness of Christ. It was God that gave them this clothing; for it is said, *God made them coats of skins, and clothed them.* The righteousness with which we are clothed, is of God. It is he only clothes the naked soul.

Our first parents, who were naked, were clothed at the expense of life. Beasts were slain, in order to afford them clothing. So does Christ, to afford clothing to our naked souls. The tabernacle in the wilderness, which signified the church, was covered with rams' skins died red, as though they were dipped in blood to signify that Christ's righteousness was wrought out through the pains of death, under which he shed his precious blood.

We observed before, that the light that the church enjoyed from the fall of man, till Christ came, was like the light which we enjoy in the night; not the light of the sun directly, but as reflected from the moon and other luminaries; which light prefigured Christ, the Son of righteousness that was afterwards to arise. This light they had chiefly two ways: one was by predictions of Christ to come; the other was by types and shadows, whereby his coming and redemption were prefigured. The first thing that was done to prepare the way for Christ in

the former of these ways, was in that promise noticed in the foregoing particular; and the first thing of the latter kind, was that institution of sacrifices that we are now upon. As that promise in Gen. iii. 15. was the first dawn of gospel light after the fall in *prophecy;* so the institution of *sacrifices* was the first hint of it in types. The former was done in pursuance of Christ's prophetical office; in the latter, Christ exhibited himself in his priestly office.

The institution of sacrifices was a great thing done towards preparing the way for Christ's coming, and working out redemption. For the sacrifices of the Old Testament were the main of all the Old Testament types of Christ and his redemption; and it tended to establish in the minds of God's visible church the necessity of a propitiatory sacrifice, in order to the Deity's being satisfied for sin; and so prepared the way for the reception of the glorious gospel, that reveals the great sacrifice in the visible church, and not only so, but through the world of mankind. For from this institution of sacrifices, all nations derived the custom of sacrificing to the gods, to atone for their sins. No nation, however barbarous, was found without it. This is a great evidence of the truth of the Christian religion; for no nation, except the Jews, could tell how they came by this custom, or to what purpose it was to offer sacrifices to their deities. The light of nature did not teach them any such thing. That did not teach them that the gods were hungry, and fed upon the flesh which they burnt in sacrifice: and yet they all had this custom: of which no other account can be given, but that they derived it from Noah, who had it from his ancestors, on whom God had enjoined it as a type of the great sacrifice of Christ. However, by this means all nations of the world had their minds possessed with this notion, that an atonement or sacrifice for sin was necessary; and a way was made for their more readily receiving the great doctrine of the gospel, the atonement and sacrifice of Christ.

IV. God soon after the fall began actually to *save* the souls of men through Christ's redemption. In this, Christ, who had lately taken upon him the work of mediator between God and man, did first begin that work, wherein he appeared in the exercise of his *kingly* office; as in the sacrifices he was represented in his *priestly* office, and in the first prediction of redemption by Christ he had appeared in the exercise of his *prophetical* office. In that prediction the light of Christ's redemption first began to dawn in the prophecies of it; in the institution of sacrifices it first began to dawn in the *types* of it; in this, viz. his beginning actually to save men, it first began to dawn in the fruit of it.

It is probable, therefore, that Adam and Eve were the first fruits of Christ's redemption: it is probable by God's manner

of treating them, by his comforting them as he did, after their awakenings and terrors. They were awakened, and ashamed with a sense of their guilt, after their eyes were opened, and they saw that they were naked, and sewed fig-leaves to cover their nakedness; as the sinner, under the first awakenings, is wont to endeavour to hide the nakedness of his soul, by a fancied righteousness of his own. Then they were further terrified and awakened, by hearing the voice of God as he was coming to condemn them. Their coverings of fig-leaves do not answer the purpose; but notwithstanding these, they ran to hide themselves among the trees of the garden, because they were naked, not daring to trust to their fig-leaves to hide their nakedness from God. Then they were further awakened by God's calling of them to a strict account. But while their terrors were raised to such a height, and they stood, as we may suppose, trembling and astonished before their judge, without any expedient whence they could gather any hope, then God took care to hold forth some encouragement, to keep them from the dreadful effects of despair under their awakenings, by giving a hint of a design of mercy by a Saviour, even before he pronounced sentence against them. And when after this he proceeded to pronounce sentence, whereby we may suppose their terrors were further raised, God soon after took care to encourage them, and to let them see, that he had not wholly cast them off, by taking a fatherly care of them in their fallen, naked, and miserable state, by making them coats of skins and clothing them. Which also manifested an acceptance of those sacrifices that they offered to God, which were types of what God had promised, when he said, "The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head." This promise there is reason to think, they believed and embraced. Eve seems plainly to express her hope in and dependence on that promise, in what she says at the birth of Cain, Gen. iv. 1. "I have gotten a man from the Lord;" *i. e.* as God has promised, that my seed should bruise the serpent's head; so now has God given me this pledge and token of it, and I have a seed born. She plainly owns, that this child was from God, and hoped that her promised seed was to be of this, her eldest son; though she was mistaken, as Abraham was with respect to Ishmael, as Jacob was with respect to Esau, and as Samuel was with respect to the first born of Jesse. And especially does what she said at the birth of Seth, express her hope and dependence on the promise of God; (ver. 25.) "For God hath appointed me another seed, instead of Abel, whom Cain slew."

Thus it is exceeding probable, if not evident, that as Christ took on him the work of mediator as soon as man fell; so that he now immediately began his work of redemption in its *effect*, and that he immediately encountered his great enemy

the devil, whom he had undertaken to conquer, and rescued those two first captives out of his hands; therein baffling him, soon after his triumph over them, whereby he had made them his captives. And though he seemed sure of them and all their posterity, Christ the Redeemer soon showed him that he was mistaken. He let him see it, in delivering those first captives, and so soon gave him an instance of the fulfilment of that threatening, *The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head;* and in this instance a presage of his subduing all his enemies under his feet.

After this we have another instance of redemption in one of their children, righteous Abel as the scripture calls him; whose soul perhaps was the first that went to heaven through Christ's redemption. In him we have at least the first recorded instance of the death of a redeemed person. If he was the first, then as the redemption of Christ began to dawn before in the souls of men in their conversion and justification, in him it first began to dawn in glorification; and in him the angels began first to do the part of ministering spirits to Christ, in going forth to conduct to glory the souls of the redeemed. And in him the elect angels in heaven had the first opportunity to see so wonderful a thing as the soul of one of the fallen race of mankind, that had been sunk by the fall into such an abyss of sin and misery, brought to heaven, and in the enjoyment of heavenly glory, which was a much greater thing than if they had seen him returned to the earthly paradise. Thus they saw the glorious effect of Christ's redemption, in the great honour and happiness that was procured for sinful, miserable creatures.

V. The next remarkable thing that God did in farther carrying on this great redemption, was the first uncommon pouring out of the Spirit, through Christ, in the days of Enos. We read, Gen. iv. 26. "Then began men to call upon the name of the Lord." The meaning of those words has been considerably controverted among divines. We cannot suppose the meaning is, that then first men performed the duty of prayer. Prayer is a duty of natural religion, and a duty to which a spirit of piety does most naturally lead men. Prayer is the very breath of a spirit of piety; we cannot suppose, therefore, that holy men before, for above two hundred years, had lived without prayer. Therefore some divines think, that the meaning is, that then men first began to perform public worship, or to call upon the name of the Lord in public assemblies. However, thus much must necessarily be understood by it, viz. that there was something *new* in the visible church of God with respect to calling upon the name of the Lord; that there was a great *addition* to the performance of this duty; and that in some respect or other it was carried far beyond

what it ever had been before, which must be the consequence of a remarkable pouring out of the spirit of God.

If it was now first that men were stirred up to meet in assemblies to assist one another in seeking God, so as they never had done before, it argues something extraordinary as the cause; and could be from nothing but the uncommon influences of God's Spirit. We see by experience, that a remarkable pouring out of God's Spirit is always attended with such an effect, viz. a great increase of the performance of the duty of prayer. When the Spirit of God begins a work on men's hearts, it immediately sets them to calling on the name of the Lord. As it is was with Paul after the Spirit of God had arrested him; *Behold, he prayeth!* so it has been in all remarkable effusions of the Spirit of God recorded in scripture; and so it is foretold it will be in the latter days. It is foretold, that the holy Spirit will be poured out as a spirit of grace and supplication, Zech. xii. 10. See also Zeph. iii. 9. "For then will I turn to the people a pure language, that they may all call upon the name of the Lord, to serve him with one consent."

And when it is said, *Then began men to call upon the name of the Lord*, no more can be intended by it than that this was the *first remarkable* season of this nature that ever was. It was the beginning, or the first, of such a work of God. In this manner such an expression is commonly used in scripture: so, I Sam. xiv. 35. "And Saul built an altar unto the Lord; the same was the first altar that he built unto the Lord. In the Hebrew it is, as you may see in the margin, *that altar he began to build unto the Lord*, Heb. ii. 3. "How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation, which first began to be spoken by the Lord?"

It may here be observed, that from the fall of man to our day, the work of redemption in its effect has mainly been carried on by remarkable communications of the Spirit of God. Though there be a more constant influence of God's Spirit always in some degree attending his ordinances; yet the way in which the greatest things have been done towards carrying on this work, always have been by remarkable effusions, at special seasons of mercy, as may fully appear hereafter in our further prosecution of our subject. And this in the days of Enos, was the first remarkable pouring out of the Spirit of God, that ever was. There had been a saving work of God on the hearts of some before; but now God was pleased to bring in a harvest of souls to Christ; so that in this we see that great building, of which God laid the foundation immediately after the fall of man, carried on further, and built higher, than ever it had been before.

VI. The next thing I shall notice, is the eminently holy

life of Enoch, who, we have reason to think, was a saint of greater eminency than any that had been before him; so that in this respect the work of redemption was carried on to a still greater height. With respect to its effect in the visible church in *general*, we observed above how it was carried higher in the days of Enos than ever it had been before. Probably Enoch was one of the saints of that harvest; for he lived all the days that he did live on earth, in the days of Enos. And with respect to the *degree* to which this work was carried in the soul of a *particular person*, it was raised to a greater height in Enoch than ever before. His soul, built on Christ, was built up in holiness to a greater height than any preceding instance. He was a wonderful instance of Christ's redemption, and of the efficacy of his grace.

VII. In Enoch's time, God more expressly revealed the coming of Christ than he had before done. Jude, ver. 14, 15. "And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousand of his saints to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them, of their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him." Here Enoch prophesies of the coming of Christ. It does not seem to be confined to any *particular* coming of Christ; but it has respect in general to Christ's coming in his kingdom, and is fulfilled in a degree in both his first and second coming; and indeed in *every* remarkable manifestation Christ has made of himself in the world, for the saving of his people, and the destroying of his enemies. It is very parallel in this respect with many other prophecies of the Old Testament; and, in particular, with that great prophecy of Christ's coming in his kingdom, whence the Jews principally took their notion of the kingdom of heaven, Daniel vii. 10. "A fiery stream issued, and came forth from before him: thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him: the judgment was set, and the books were opened." And ver. 13, 14. "I saw in the night visions, and behold, one like the son of man, came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed." And though it is not unlikely that Enoch might have a more immediate respect in this prophecy, to the approaching destruction of the old world by the flood, which was a remarkable resemblance of Christ's destruction of all his enemies at his second coming, yet it doubtless looked beyond the type to the antitype.

And as this prophecy of Christ's coming is more express than any preceding it; so it is an instance of the increase of that gospel light which began to dawn presently after the fall of man; and of that building which is the subject of our present discourse, being yet further carried on, and built up higher than it had been before.

And here, by the way, I would observe, that the increase of gospel light, and the progress of the work of redemption, as it respects the church in general, from its erection to the end of the world, is very similar to the progress of the same work, and the same light, in a particular soul, from the time of its conversion, till it is perfected and crowned in glory. Sometimes the light shines brighter, and at other times more obscurely; sometimes grace prevails, at other times it seems to languish for a great while together; now corruption prevails, and then grace revives again. But in general grace is growing: from its first infusion, till it is perfected in glory, the kingdom of Christ is building up in the soul. So it is with respect to the great affair in general, as it relates to the universal subject of it, and as it is carried on from its first beginning, till it is perfected at the end of the world.

VIII. The next remarkable thing towards carrying on this work, was the translation of Enoch into heaven. (Gen. v. 24.) "And Enoch walked with God, and he was not; for God took him." Moses, in giving an account of the genealogy of those that were of the line of Noah, does not say concerning Enoch, he lived so long and he died, as he does of the rest: but, "he was not, for God took him;" *i. e.* he translated him; in body and soul carried him to heaven without dying, as it is explained in Heb. xi. 5. "By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death." By this wonderful work of God, the work of redemption was carried to a greater height, in several respects, than it had been before.

When showing what God aimed at in the work of redemption, or what were the main things he intended to bring to pass; among other things I mentioned the perfect restoration of the ruins of the fall, with respect to the elect, both in soul and body. Now this translation of Enoch was the first instance of restoration with respect to the *body*. There had been many instances of restoring the *soul* of man by Christ's redemption, but none of redeeming and actually saving the body, till now. All the *bodies* of the elect are to be saved as well as their *souls*. At the end of the world, all their bodies shall actually be redeemed; those that then shall have been dead, by a resurrection; and others, that then shall be living, by causing them to undergo a glorious change. There was a number of the bodies of saints raised and glorified, at the resurrection of Christ; and before that there was an instance of a

body glorified in Elijah. But the first instance of all was this of Enoch.

By this the work of redemption was carried on still further; as, this wonderful work of God afforded a great increase of gospel light to the church, hereby it had a clearer manifestation of a future state, and of the glorious reward of the saints in heaven. We are told, 2 Tim. i. 10. "That life and immortality are brought to light by the gospel." What was said in the Old Testament of a future state, is very obscure, in comparison with the more full, plain, and abundant revelation given of it in the New. But yet even in those early days, the church of God, in this instance, was favoured with an instance of it set before their eyes, in that one of their brethren was actually taken up to heaven without dying; which we have all reason to think the church of God knew then, as they afterwards knew Elijah's translation. And as this was a clearer manifestation of a future state than the church had enjoyed before, so it was a pledge or earnest of that future glorification of all the saints which God intended through the redemption of Jesus Christ.

IX. The next thing that I shall observe, was the upholding of the church of God in that family from which Christ was to proceed during that great and general defection which preceded the flood. The church of God, in all probability, was small, in comparison with the rest of the world, from the time that mankind began to multiply; or from the time, (Gen. iv. 16.) "when Cain went out from the presence of the Lord, and dwelt in the land of Nod;" which, being interpreted, is the land of *banishment*. The church seems to have been kept up chiefly in the posterity of Seth; for this was the seed that God appointed instead of Abel, whom Cain slew. But we cannot reasonably suppose that Seth's posterity were one fiftieth part of the world: *For Adam was one hundred and thirty years old when Seth was born.* But Cain, who seems to have been the leader of those that were not of the church, was Adam's eldest child, and probably was born soon after the fall, which doubtless was soon after Adam's creation; so that there was time for Cain to have many sons before Seth was born; besides many other children that probably Adam and Eve had before this time, agreeably to God's blessing, *Be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth;* and many of these children might have children. The history of Cain before Seth was born, seems to imply, that there were great numbers of men on the earth: Gen. iv. 14, 15. "Behold, thou hast driven me out this day from the face of the earth: and from thy face shall I be hid, and I shall be a fugitive and a vagabond in the earth: and it shall come to pass, that every one that findeth me shall slay me. And the Lord said

unto him, Therefore whosoever slayeth Cain, vengeance shall be taken on him seven-fold. And the Lord set a mark upon Cain, lest any finding him should kill him." And all who existed when Seth was born, must be supposed to stand in equal capacity of multiplying their posterity with him; and therefore, Seth's posterity were but a small part of the inhabitants of the world.

But after the days of Enos and Enoch, (for Enoch was translated before Enos died) the church of God greatly diminished, in proportion as multitudes of the line of Seth, born in the church of God, fell away, and joined with the wicked world, principally by means of intermarriages with them; as Gen. vi. 1, 2, 4. "And it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born unto them, that the sons of God saw the daughters of men, that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose.—There were giants in the earth in those days; and also after that, when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, and they bare children to them, the same became mighty men, which were of old men of renown." By the *sons of God* here are doubtless meant the children of the church. It is a denomination often given them in scripture. They intermarried with the wicked world, and so had their hearts led away from God; and there was a great and continual defection from the church. The church, that used to be a restraint on the wicked world, diminished exceedingly, and so wickedness went on without restraint. Satan, that old serpent the devil, that tempted our first parents, and set up himself as the God of this world, raged exceedingly; and every imagination of the thoughts of man's heart was only evil continually, and the earth was filled with violence. It seemed to be deluged with wickedness then, as it was with water afterwards: and mankind in general were swallowed up in it. And now Satan made a most violent and potent attempt to devour the church of God; and had almost done it. But yet God restored it in the midst of all this flood of wickedness and violence. He kept it up in that line of which Christ was to proceed. He would not suffer it to be destroyed, for a blessing was in it. There was a particular family, a root whence the branch of righteousness was afterwards to shoot forth. And therefore however the branches were lopped off, and the tree seemed to be destroyed, yet God in the midst of all, kept alive this root, by his wonderful redeeming power and grace, so that the gates of hell could not prevail against it.

Thus I have shown how God carried on the great affair of redemption; how the building went on during this first period, from the fall of man, till God brought the flood on the earth. And I would observe, that though the Mosaic history

during that space be very short; yet it is exceedingly comprehensive and instructive. And it may also be profitable for us here to observe, the efficacy of that purchase of redemption which had such great effects so many ages before Christ actually appeared.

PART II.

From the flood to the Calling of Abraham.

I proceed now to show how the same work was carried on *from the beginning of the flood till the calling of Abraham.* For though that mighty universal deluge overthrew the world; yet it did not overthrow this building of God, the work of redemption. This went on; and instead of being overthrown, continued to be built up, in order to a further preparation for the great Saviour's coming into the world, for the redemption of his people.

I. The flood itself was a work of God that belonged to this great affair, and tended to promote it. All the mighty works of God, from the fall of man to the end of the world, are deducible to this work; and if seen in a right view, will appear as parts of it, and so many steps for carrying it on; and doubtless so great a work, so remarkable and universal a catastrophe, as the deluge was, cannot be excepted. Thereby God removed out of the way the enemies and obstacles that were ready to overthrow it.

Satan seems to have been in a dreadful rage just before the flood, and his rage then doubtless was, as it always has been, chiefly against the church of God to overthrow it; and he had filled the earth with violence and rage against it. He had drawn over almost all the world to be on his side, and they listed under his banner against Christ and his church. We read, that *the earth was filled with violence;* and doubtless that violence was chiefly against the church, in fulfilment of what was foretold, *I will put enmity between thy seed and her seed.* Their enmity and violence was so great, and the enemies of the church so numerous, the whole world being against it, that it was come to the last extremity. Noah's reproofs, and his preaching of righteousness, were utterly disregarded. God's spirit had striven with them an hundred and twenty years, but all in vain; and the church was reduced to so narrow limits, as to be confined to one family. There was no prospect of any thing else but of their totally swallowing up the church, and

that in a very little time; and so wholly destroying that small root that had the blessing in it, or whence the Redeemer was to proceed.

And, therefore, God's destroying those enemies of the church by the flood, belongs to this affair of redemption; for it was one thing that was done in fulfilment of the covenant of grace, as it was revealed to Adam: "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head." This was only a destruction of the seed of the serpent in the midst of their utmost violent rage against the seed of the woman, when in the utmost peril by them.

We read in scripture of scarce any destruction of nations but that one main reason given for it is, their enmity and injuries against God's church: and doubtless this was one main reason of the destruction of all nations by the flood. The giants that were in those days, in all likelihood, got themselves renown by their great exploits against heaven, and against Christ and his church, the remaining sons of God that had not corrupted themselves.

We read, that just before the world shall be destroyed by fire, "the nations that are in the four quarters of the earth, shall gather together against the church as the sand of the sea, and shall go upon the breadth of the earth, and compass the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city; and then fire shall come down from God out of heaven, and devour them," Rev. xx. 8, 9. And it seems there was that which was very parallel to it, just before the world was destroyed by water. And therefore their destruction was a work of God that did as much belong to the work of redemption, as the destruction of the *Egyptians* belonged to the redemption of the children of Israel out of Egypt, or as the destruction of Sennacherib's mighty army, that had compassed about Jerusalem to destroy it, belonged to God's redemption of that city from them.

By means of this flood, all the enemies of God's church, against whom that little handful had no strength, were swept off at once. God took their part, appeared for them against their enemies, and drowned those of whom they had been afraid, in the flood of water, as he drowned the enemies of Israel that pursued them in the Red Sea.

Indeed God could have taken other methods to deliver his church: he could have converted all the world instead of drowning it; and so he could have taken another method than drowning the *Egyptians* in the Red Sea. But that is no argument, that the method he did take was not a method to show his redeeming mercy to them.

By the deluge, the enemies of God's people were dispossessed of the earth, and the whole earth was given to Noah and his family to possess it in quiet; as God made room for the

Israelites in Canaan, by casting out their enemies from before them. And God thus taking the possession of the enemies of the church, and giving it all to his church, was agreeable to that promise of the covenant of grace, Ps. xxxvii. 9—11. "For evil doers shall be cut off: but those that wait upon the Lord, they shall inherit the earth. For yet a little while and the wicked shall not be: yea, thou shalt diligently consider his place, and it shall not be. But the meek shall inherit the earth, and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace."

II. Another thing belonging to the same work, was God's wonderfully preserving that family of which the Redeemer was to proceed, when all the rest of the world was drowned. God's drowning the world, and saving Noah and his family, were both reducible to this great work. The saving of Noah and his family belonged to it two ways, viz. as from that family the Redeemer was to proceed, and it was the mystical body of Christ that was there saved. The manner of saving those persons, when all the world besides was so overthrown, was very wonderful. It was a wonderful type of the redemption of Christ, of that redemption that is sealed by the baptism of water, and is so spoken of in the New Testament, as 1 Pet. iii. 20, 21. "Which sometimes were disobedient, when once the long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls, were saved by water. The like figure whereunto, even baptism, doth also now save us, (not the putting away of the sins of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience towards God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ." That water which washed away the filth of the world, that cleared the world of wicked men, was a type of the blood of Christ, that takes away the sin of the world. That water which delivered Noah and his sons from their enemies, is a type of the blood that delivers God's church from their sins, their worst enemies. That water which was so plentiful and abundant, that it filled the world, and reached above the tops of the highest mountains, was a type of that blood, which is sufficient for the whole world; sufficient to bury the highest mountains of sin. The ark, that was the refuge and hiding-place of the church in this time of storm and flood, was a type of Christ, the true hiding-place of the church from the storms and floods of God's wrath.

III. The next thing I would observe is, the *new grant* of the earth God made to Noah and his family immediately after the flood, as founded on the covenant of grace. The sacrifice of Christ was represented by Noah's building an altar to the Lord, and offering a sacrifice of every clean beast, and every clean fowl. And we have an account of God accepting this sacrifice: and thereupon he blessed Noah, and established his covenant with him, and with his seed, promising to destroy

the earth in like manner no more; signifying that it is by the sacrifice of Christ, God's favour is obtained, and his people are in safety from destroying judgments, and obtain the blessing of the Lord. And God now, on occasion of this sacrifice that Noah offered, gives him and his posterity a new grant of the earth; a new power of dominion over the creatures, as founded on that sacrifice, and so founded on the covenant of grace. And so it is to be looked upon as a different grant from that which was made to Adam, Gen. i. 28. "And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth." That grant was not founded on the covenant of *grace;* for it was given to Adam while he was under the covenant of *works*, and therefore was antiquated when that covenant ceased. Hence it came to pass, that the earth was taken away from mankind by the flood; for the first grant was forfeited; and God had never made another after that, till after the flood. If the first covenant had not been broken, God never would have drowned the world, and so have taken it away from mankind; for then the first grant made to mankind would have stood good. But that being broken, God, after a while, destroyed the earth, when the wickedness of man was great.

But after the flood, on Noah's offering a sacrifice that represented the sacrifice of Christ, God, in smelling a sweet savour, or accepting the sacrifice—as it was a representation of the true sacrifice of Christ, which is a sweet savour indeed to God—gives Noah a new grant of the earth, founded on that covenant of grace which is by the sacrifice of Christ, with a promise annexed, that now the earth should no more be destroyed, till the consummation of all things; (Gen. viii. 20—22. and chap. ix. 1—3, 7.) The reason why such a promise, that God would no more destroy the earth, was added to this grant made to Noah, and not to that made to Adam, was because this was founded on the covenant of grace, of which Christ was the surety, and therefore could not be broken. And therefore it comes to pass now, that though the wickedness of man has dreadfully raged, and the earth has been filled with violence and wickedness, one age after another, and much more dreadful and aggravated wickedness, being against so much greater light and mercy; especially in these days of the gospel: yet God's patience holds out; God does not destroy the earth: his mercy and forbearance abide according to his promise; and his grant established with Noah and his sons abides firm and good, being founded on the covenant of grace.

IV. On this God renews with Noah and his sons the covenant of grace, Gen. ix. 9, 10. "And I, behold, I establish my

covenant with you, and with your seed after you, and with every living creature that is with you," &c.; which was the covenant of grace; of which even the brute creation have this benefit, that it shall never be destroyed again until the consummation of all things. By this expression in scripture, *my covenant*, is commonly to be understood the covenant of grace. The manner of expression, *I will establish my covenant with you, and with your seed after you*, shows plainly that it was a covenant already in being, and that Noah would understand by that denomination the covenant of grace.

V. God's disappointing the design of building the city and tower of Babel belongs to the great work of redemption. For that was undertaken in opposition of this great building of God of which we are speaking. Men's going about to build such a city and tower, was an effect of the corruption into which mankind were now fallen. This city and tower was set up in opposition to the city of God, as the god to whom they built it was their pride. Being sunk into a disposition to forsake the true God, the first idol they set up in his room, was their own fame. And as this city and tower had their foundation laid in the pride and vanity of men, and the haughtiness of their minds, so it was built on a foundation exceedingly contrary to the nature of the kingdom of Christ, and his redeemed city, which has its foundation laid in humility.

Therefore God saw that it tended to frustrate the design of that great building which was founded in Christ's humiliation; and therefore the thing displeased the Lord, and he baffled and confounded the design. God will frustrate and confound all other designs, that are set up in opposition to the great work of redemption.

Isaiah, (chap. ii.) representing God setting up the kingdom of Christ in the world, foretells how, in order to it, he will bring down the haughtiness of men, and how the day of the Lord shall be on *every high tower*, and upon *every fenced wall*, &c. Christ's kingdom is established, by bringing down every high thing to make way for it, 2 Cor. x. 4, 5. "For the weapons of our warfare are mighty through God, to the pulling down of strong holds, casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God." What is done in a particular soul, to make way for the setting up of Christ's kingdom, is to destroy Babel in that soul."

They intended to have built Babel up to heaven. However that building of which we speak shall reach to heaven indeed, the highest heavens, at the end of the world, when it shall be finished; and therefore God would not suffer the building of his enemies, in opposition to it, to prosper. If they had prospered in building that city and tower, it might have

kept the world of wicked men, the enemies of the church, together, as that was their design. They might have remained united in one vast, powerful city; and so have been too powerful for the city of God.

This Babel is the same with the city of Babylon; for Babylon in the original is Babel. But Babylon is always spoken of in scripture as chiefly opposite to the city of God, as a powerful and terrible enemy, notwithstanding this great check put to the building of it in the beginning. But it probably would have been vastly more powerful, and able to vex, if not to destroy the church of God, if it had not been thus checked.

Thus it was in kindness to his church, and in prosecution of the great design of redemption, that God put a stop to the building of the city and tower of Babel.

VI. The dispersing of the nations, and dividing the earth among its inhabitants, immediately after God had caused the building of Babel to cease. This was done so as most to suit the great design of redemption. And particularly, God therein had an eye to the future propagation of the Gospel among the nations. They were so placed, their habitation so limited, round about the land of Canaan, as most suited that design. Deut. xxxii. 8. "When the Most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when he separated the sons of Adam, he set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel." Acts xvii. 26, 27. "And hath made of one blood all nations of men, for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation; that they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him." The land of Canaan was the most conveniently situated of any place in the world, for the purpose of spreading revealed light among the nations in general. The Roman empire, the chief part of the civilized world, in the apostolic age, was in the countries round about Jerusalem. The devil seeing the advantage of this situation of the nations, for promoting the great work of redemption, and the disadvantage of it with respect to the interests of his kingdom, afterward led away many nations into the remotest parts of the world, to get them out of the way of the gospel. Thus he led some into America; and others into northern cold regions, that are almost inaccessible.

VII. Another thing I would mention in this period, was God's preserving the true religion in that line from which Christ was to proceed, when the world in general apostatized to idolatry, and the church was in imminent danger of being swallowed in the general corruption. Although God had lately wrought so wonderfully for the deliverance of his church, and had shewn so great mercy towards it,

as for its sake even to destroy all the rest of the world; and although he had lately renewed and established his covenant of grace with Noah and his sons; yet so prone is the corrupt heart of man to depart from God, and to sink into the depths of wickedness, darkness, and delusion, that the world soon after the flood fell into gross idolatry; so that before Abraham the distemper was become almost universal. The earth was become very corrupt at the time of the building of Babel; even God's people themselves, that line of which Christ was to come. Josh. xxiv. 2. "Your fathers dwelt on the other side of the flood in old time, even Terrah the father of Abraham, and the father of Nahor; and *they served other gods.*" The other side of the flood means beyond the river Euphrates, where the ancestors of Abraham lived.

We are not to understand that they were *wholly* drawn off to idolatry, to forsake the true God. For God is said to be the God of Nahor: Gen. xxxi. 53. "The God of Abraham, and the God of Nahor, the God of their father, judge betwixt us." But they partook in some measure of the general and almost universal corruption of the times; as Solomon was in a measure infected with idolatrous corruption; and as the children of Israel in Egypt are said to serve other gods, though there was the true church of God among them; and as there were images kept for a considerable time in the family of Jacob; the corruption being brought from Padan-Aram, whence he fetched his wives.

This was the second time that the church was almost brought to nothing by the corruption and general defection of the world from true religion. But still the true religion was kept up in the family from which Christ was to proceed; which is another instance of God's remarkably preserving his church in a time of a general deluge of wickedness; and wherein, although the god of this world raged, and had almost swallowed up God's church, yet he did not suffer the gates of hell to prevail against it.

PART III.

From the calling of Abraham to Moses.

I proceed now to show how the work of redemption was carried on from *the calling of Abraham to Moses.* And,

I. It pleased God now to separate that person of whom Christ was to come, from the rest of the world, that his church might be upheld in his family and posterity till that time. He called Abraham out of his own country, and from his kindred, to go into a distant country, that God should show him; and brought him first out of Ur of the Chaldees to Charran, and then to the land of Canaan.

It was before observed, that the idolatrous corruption of the world was now become general; mankind were almost wholly over-run with idolatry. God therefore saw it necessary, in order to uphold true religion in the world, that there should be a family separated from all others. It proved to be high time to take this course, lest the church of Christ should wholly be carried away with the apostacy. For Abraham's own country and kindred had most of them fallen off; and without some extraordinary interposition of Providence, in all likelihood, in a generation or two more, the true religion in this line would have been extinct. And therefore God called Abraham, the person in whose family he intended to uphold the true religion, out of his own country, and from his kindred, to a far distant country, that his posterity might there remain a people separate from all the rest of the world; that so the true religion might be upheld there, while all mankind besides were swallowed up in Heathenism.

The land of the Chaldees, whence Abraham was called, was the country about Babel. Babel, or Babylon, was the chief city of Chaldea. Learned men suppose, by what they gather from the most ancient accounts of things, that it was in this land idolatry first began; that Babel and Chaldea were the original and chief seats of the worship of idols, whence it spread into other nations. And therefore the land of the Chaldeans, the country of Babylon, is in scripture called *the land of graven images.* Jer. l. 35, 38. "A sword is upon the Chaldeans, saith the Lord, and upon the inhabitants of Babylon, and upon her princes, and upon her wise men." "A drought is upon her waters, and they shall be dried up; for it is the land of graven images, and they are mad upon their idols." God calls Abraham out of this idolatrous country, to a great distance from it. And when he came there, he gave him no inheritance in it, no not so much as to set his foot on: but he remained a stranger and a

sojourner, that he and his family might be kept separate from all the world.

This was a new thing: God had never taken such a method before. His church had not in this manner been separated from the rest of the world till now; but were wont to dwell with them without any bar or fence to keep them separate; the mischievous consequence of which had been found once and again. Before the flood the effect of God's people living intermingled with the wicked world, without any remarkable wall of separation, was, that the sons of the church joined in marriage with others, and thereby almost all soon became infected, and the church was almost brought to nothing. The method that God then took to fence the church was, to drown the wicked world, and save the church in the ark. Before Abraham was called, the world was become corrupt again. But now God took another method; he did not destroy the wicked world, and save Abraham, and his wife, and Lot, but calls these persons to go and live separate from the rest of the world.

This was a new and great thing that God did toward the work of redemption. It was about the middle of the space of time between the fall of man and the coming of Christ; about two thousand years before the great Redeemer was to appear. But by this calling of Abraham, the ancestor of Christ, a foundation was laid for upholding the church in the world, till Christ should come. For the world having become idolatrous, there was a necessity in order to this, that the seed of the woman should be thus separated from it.

And then it was needful that there should be a particular nation separated from the rest of the world, to receive the types and prophecies that were to be given of Christ, to prepare the way for his coming; that to them might be committed the oracles of God; that by them the history of God's great works of creation and providence might be preserved; that Christ might be born of this nation; and that from hence the light of the gospel might shine forth to the rest of the world. These ends could not well be obtained, if God's people, through all these two thousand years, had lived intermixed with the heathen world. So that the calling of Abraham may be looked upon as a kind of new foundation laid for the visible church of God, in a more distinct and regular state. Abraham, being the person in whom this foundation is laid, is represented in scripture as though he were the father of all the church, the father of all them that believe; a root whence the visible church rose as a tree, distinct from all other plants. Of this tree Christ was the branch of righteousness; and from it, after Christ came, the natural branches were broken off, and the Gentiles were grafted in. So that Abraham still remains

the father, the root of the church. It is the same tree which, from that small beginning in Abraham's time, has in these days of the gospel spread its branches over a great part of the earth, and will fill the whole in due time, and at the end of the world shall be transplanted from an earthly soil into the paradise of God.

II. There accompanied this a more particular and full revelation and confirmation of the covenant of grace than ever before. There had been before this two particular and solemn editions or confirmations of this covenant; one, to our first parents, soon after the fall; the other to Noah and his family, soon after the flood. And now there is a third, at and after the calling of Abraham. It was now revealed to Abraham, not only that Christ should come; but that he should be his seed; and promised, that all the families of the earth should be blessed in him. And God repeated the promises of this to Abraham. The first promise was when he first called him, Gen. xii. 2. "And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing." The same promise was renewed after he came into the land of Canaan, (chap. xiii. 14, &c.) Again after Abraham had returned from the slaughter of the kings, (chap. xv. 5, 6.) And a fourth time after his offering up Isaac, (chap. xxii. 16—18.)

In this renewal of the covenant of grace with Abraham, several particulars concerning it were revealed more fully than before; not only that Christ was to be of Abraham's seed, but also, the calling of the Gentiles, that all nations should be brought into the church, all the families of the earth made blessed. And then the great condition of the covenant of grace, which is faith, was now more fully made known. Gen. xv. 5, 6. "And he said unto him, So shall thy seed be. And Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness." Which is much noticed in the New Testament, as that for which Abraham was called the father of believers.

And as there was now a further revelation of the covenant of grace, so there was a further confirmation of it by seals and pledges; particularly circumcision, which was a seal of the covenant of grace, as appears by the first institution of it, Gen. xvii. It there appears to be a seal of that covenant by which God promised to make Abraham a father of many nations, (ver. 5, 9, 10.) And we are expressly taught, that it was "a seal of the righteousness of faith," Rom. iv. 11. Speaking of Abraham, the apostle says, "he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of faith."

Abraham's family and posterity must be kept separate from the rest of the world, till Christ should come; and this sacrament was the principal wall of separation. Besides, God

gave Abraham a remarkable pledge of the fulfilment of the promise he had made him, in his victory over Chedorlaomer and the kings that were with him. Chedorlaomer seems to have been a great emperor, who reigned over a great part of the world at that day; and though he had his seat at Elam, which was not much if any thing short of a thousand miles distant from the land of Canaan, yet he extended his empire so as to reign over many parts of the land of Canaan, as appears by chap. xiv. 4, 5, 6, 7. It is supposed by learned men, that he was a king of the Assyrian empire at that day, which had been before begun by Nimrod at Babel. And as it was the honour of kings in those days to build cities for the seat of their empire, (Gen. x. 10—12,) so it is conjectured, that he had gone forth and built him a city in Elam, and made that his seat; and that those other kings who came with him, were his deputies in the several cities and countries where they reigned. But yet, as mighty an empire as he had, and as great an army as he came with, Abraham, only with his trained servants, that were born in his house, conquered and subdued this mighty emperor, the kings that came with him, and all their army. This he received of God as a pledge of what he had promised, viz. the victory that Christ his seed should obtain over the nations of the earth, whereby he should possess the gates of his enemies. It is plainly spoken of as such in the 41st Isaiah. In that chapter is foretold the future glorious victory the church shall obtain over the nations of the world, (ver. 1, 10, 15.) This victory of Abraham over such a great emperor and his mighty forces, is spoken of as a pledge and earnest of victory to the church, (ver. 2, 3.) "Who raised up the righteous man from the east, called him to his foot, gave the nations before him, and made him rule over kings? He gave them as the dust of his sword, and as driven stubble to his bow. He pursued them, and passed safely; even by the way that he had not gone with his feet."

Another remarkable confirmation Abraham received of the covenant of grace, was when he returned from the slaughter of the kings; when Melchizedec the king of Salem, the priest of the most high God, that great type of Christ, met him, and blessed him, and brought forth bread and wine. The bread and wine signified the same blessings of the covenant of grace, that the bread and wine does in the sacrament of the Lord's supper. As Abraham had a seal of the covenant in circumcision that was equivalent to baptism, so now he had a seal of it equivalent to the Lord's supper. And Melchizedec's coming to meet him with such a seal of the covenant of grace, on the occasion of this victory, evinces that it was a pledge of God's fulfilment of the same covenant. (Gen. xiv. 19, 20.)

Another confirmation of the covenant of grace, was the vision he had, in the deep sleep that fell upon him, of the smoking furnace, and burning lamp, that passed between the parts of the sacrifice, (Gen. xv.) The sacrifice signified that of Christ. The smoking furnace that passed through the midst of that sacrifice first signified the sufferings of Christ. But the burning lamp that followed, which shone with a clear bright light, signifies the glory that followed Christ's sufferings, and was procured by them.

Another remarkable pledge that God gave Abraham of the fulfilment of the covenant of grace, was his giving of that child of whom Christ was to come, in his old age; (Heb. xi. 11, 12. and Rom. iv. 18, &c.) and his delivering Isaac, after he was laid upon the wood of the sacrifice to be slain. This was a confirmation of Abraham's faith in the promise that God had made of Christ, that he should be of Isaac's posterity; and was a representation of the resurrection of Christ. (Heb. xi. 17—19.) And because this was given as a confirmation of the covenant of grace, therefore God renewed that covenant with Abraham on this occasion, (Gen. xxiv. 15, &c.)

Thus you see how much more fully the covenant of grace was revealed and confirmed in Abraham's time than ever it had been before; by means of which Abraham seems to have had a clear view of Christ the great Redeemer, and the future things that were to be accomplished by him. And therefore Christ informs us, that *Abraham rejoiced to see his day, and he saw it, and was glad*, John viii. 56. So great an advance did it please God now to make in this building, which he had been carrying on from the beginning of the world.

III. The next thing is God's preserving the patriarchs for so long a time in the midst of the wicked inhabitants of Canaan, and from all other enemies. The patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, were those of whom Christ was to proceed; and they were now separated from the world, that in them his church might be upheld. Therefore, in preserving them, the great design of redemption was carried on. He preserved them, and kept the inhabitants of the land where they sojourned from destroying them; which was a remarkable dispensation of Providence. For the inhabitants of the land were at that day very wicked, though they grew more wicked afterwards. This appears by Gen. xv. 16. "In the fourth generation they shall come hither again; for the iniquity of the Canaanites is not yet full:" As much as to say, Though it be very great, yet it is not yet full. And their great wickedness also appears by Abraham and Isaac's aversion to their children marrying any of the daughters of the land. Abraham, when he was old, could not be content till he had made his servant swear that he would not take a wife for his son of the daughters

of the land. And Isaac and Rebecca were content to send away Jacob to so great a distance as Padan-Aram, to take him a wife thence. And when Esau married some of the daughters of the land, we are told, that they were *a grief of mind to Isaac and Rebecca.*

Another argument of their great wickedness, was the instances we have in Sodom and Gomorrah, Admah and Zeboim, which were some of the cities of Canaan, though they were probably most notoriously wicked; and likely to have the most bitter enmity against these holy men; agreeable to what was declared at first, *I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed.* Their holy lives were a continual condemnation of their wickedness. Besides it could not be otherwise, but that they must be much in reproving their wickedness, as we find Lot was in Sodom; who, we are told, vexed his righteous soul with their unlawful deeds, and was to them a preacher of righteousness.

And they were the more exposed to them, being strangers and sojourners in the land, and having as yet no inheritance there. Men are more apt to find fault with strangers, and to be irritated by any thing in them that offends, as they were with Lot in Sodom. He very gently reproved their wickedness; and they say upon it, *This fellow came in to sojourn, and he will needs be a ruler and a judge;* and threatened what they would do to him.

But God wonderfully preserved Abraham and Lot, Isaac and Jacob, and their families, amongst them, though they were few in number, and they might quickly have destroyed them; which is taken notice of as a wonderful instance of God's preserving mercy towards his church, Psal. cv. 12, &c. "When they were but a few men in number; yea, very few, and strangers in it. When they went from one nation to another, from one kingdom to another people. He suffered no man to do them wrong; yea, he reproved kings for their sakes, saying, Touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets no harm."

This preservation was in some instances especially, very remarkable; when the people of the land were greatly irritated and provoked; as they were by Simeon and Levi's treatment of the Shechemites, in Gen. xxxiv. 30, &c. God then strangely preserved Jacob and his family, restraining the provoked people by an unusual terror on their minds, Gen. xxxv. 5. "And the terror of God was upon the cities that were round about them, and they did not pursue after the sons of Jacob."

And God preserved them not only from the Canaanites, but from all others that intended mischief to them. He preserved Jacob and his company, when pursued by Laban, full of rage, and a disposition to overtake him as an enemy. God

met him, rebuked him, and said to him, *Take heed that thou speak not to Jacob, either good or bad.* How wonderfully did he also preserve him from Esau his brother, when he came forth with an army, with a full design to cut him off! How did God, in answer to his prayer, when Jacob wrestled with Christ at Penuel, wonderfully turn Esau's heart, and make him, instead of meeting him as an enemy with slaughter and destruction, to meet him as a friend and brother, doing him no harm!

And thus was this handful, this little root that had the blessing of the Redeemer in it, preserved in the midst of enemies and dangers; which was not unlike to preserving the ark in the midst of the tempestuous deluge.

IV. The next thing I would mention is the awful destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, and the neighbouring cities. This tended to promote the great work designed two ways: First, as it tended powerfully to restrain the inhabitants of the land from injuring those holy strangers that God had brought to sojourn amongst them. Lot was one of those strangers; he came into the land with Abraham; and Sodom was destroyed for their abusive disregard of Lot, the preacher of righteousness. And their destruction came upon their committing a most injurious and abominable insult on Lot, and the strangers that were come into his house, even those angels, whom they probably took to be some of Lot's former acquaintance come to visit him. They in a most outrageous manner beset Lot's house, intending a monstrous abuse and act of violence on those strangers, and threatening to serve Lot worse than them.

But in the midst of this God smote them with blindness; and the next morning the city and the country about it was overthrown in a most terrible storm of fire and brimstone; which dreadful destruction, as it was in the sight of the rest of the inhabitants of the land, and therefore greatly tended to restrain them from hurting those holy strangers any more; it doubtless struck a dread and terror on their minds, and made them afraid to hurt them, and probably was one principal means to restrain them, and preserve the patriarchs. And when that reason is given, why the inhabitants of the land did not pursue after Jacob, when they were so provoked by the destruction of the Sechemites, viz. *that the terror of the Lord was upon them;* it is very probable, that this was the terror which was set home upon them. They remembered the amazing destruction of Sodom, and the cities of the plain, that came upon them for their abusive treatment of Lot, and so durst not hurt Jacob and his family, though they were so much provoked to it.

Another way that this awful destruction tended to promote this great affair of redemption, was, that hereby God remark-

ably exhibited the terrors of his law, to make men sensible of their need of redeeming mercy. The work of redemption never was carried on without this. The law, from the beginning, is made use of as a schoolmaster to bring men to Christ.

But under the Old Testament there was much more need of some extraordinary, visible, and sensible manifestation of God's wrath against sin, than in the days of the gospel; since a future state, and the eternal misery of hell, is more clearly revealed, and since the awful justice of God against the sins of men has been so wonderfully displayed in the sufferings of Christ. And therefore the revelation that God gave of himself in those days, used to be accompanied with much more terror than it is in these days of the gospel. So when God appeared at Mount Sinai to give the law, it was with thunders and lightning, and a thick cloud, and the voice of the trumpet exceeding loud. Some external, awful manifestations of God's wrath against sin were on some accounts especially necessary before the giving of the law: and therefore, before the flood, the terrors of the law handed down by tradition from Adam served for that purpose. Adam lived nine hundred and thirty years himself, to proclaim God's awful threatenings denounced in the covenant made with him, and how dreadful the consequences of the fall were; and others, that conversed with Adam, lived till the flood. And the destruction of the world by the flood served to exhibit the terrors of the law, and manifested the wrath of God against sin; in order to make men sensible of the absolute necessity of redeeming mercy. And some that saw the flood were alive in Abraham's time.

But this was now in a great measure forgotten; therefore God was pleased again, in a most amazing manner, to show his wrath against sin, in the destruction of these cities; which was the liveliest image of hell of any thing that ever had been; and therefore the apostle Jude says, "*They suffer the vengeance of eternal fire*," Jude 7. God rained storms of fire and brimstone upon them; probably by thick flashes of lightning. The streams of brimstone burnt up all these cities; so that they perished in the flames of divine wrath. By this might be seen the dreadful wrath of God against the ungodliness and unrighteousness of men; which tended to show the necessity of redemption, and so to promote that great work.

V. God again renewed and confirmed the covenant of grace to Isaac and to Jacob. To Isaac in these words; Gen. xxvi. 3, 4. "And I will perform the oath which I sware unto Abraham thy father; and I will make thy seed to multiply as the stars of heaven, and will give unto thy seed all these countries; and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed." And afterwards to Jacob; first, in Isaac blessing him and his seed, wherein he acted and spoke by extraordinary

divine direction, Gen. xxvii. 29. "Let people serve thee, and nations bow down to thee; be lord over thy brethren, and let thy mother's sons bow down to thee; Cursed be every one that curseth thee, and blessed be he that blesseth thee." And therefore Esau, not included in this blessing, missed of being blessed as an heir of the benefits of the covenant of grace.

This covenant was again renewed and confirmed to Jacob at Bethel, in his vision of the ladder that reached to heaven; which was a symbol of the way of salvation by Christ. The stone that Jacob rested on was a type of Christ, the stone of Israel, which the spiritual Israel rests upon; as is evident, because it was anointed, and made use of as an altar. But we know that Christ is the anointed of God, and is the only true altar. While Jacob was resting on this stone, and saw this ladder, God appears to him as his covenant God, and renews the covenant of grace with him; as in Gen. xxviii. 14. "And thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth; and thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south; and in thee and in thy seed, shall all the families of the earth be blessed."

Jacob had another remarkable confirmation of this covenant at Penuel, where he wrestled with God, and prevailed; where Christ appeared to him in the form of that nature which he was afterwards to receive into a personal union with his divine nature.—And God renewed his covenant with him again, after he left Padan-Aram, and was come up to Bethel, and where he had the vision of the ladder; as you may see in Gen. xxxv. 10, &c.

Thus the covenant of grace was now renewed much oftener than it had been before. The light of the gospel now began to shine much brighter, as the time of Christ's appearing drew nearer.

VI. The next thing I would observe, is God's remarkably preserving the family of which Christ was to proceed from perishing by famine, by the instrumentality of Joseph. When there was a seven years' famine approaching, God was pleased, by a wonderful providence, to send Joseph into Egypt, there to provide for Jacob and his family, and to keep the holy seed alive, which otherwise would have perished. Joseph was sent into Egypt for that end, as he observes, Gen. l. 20. "But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good, to save much people alive." How often had this holy root, that had in it the future branch of righteousness, the glorious Redeemer, been in danger of being destroyed! But God wonderfully preserved it.

This salvation of the house of Israel, by the hand of Joseph, was upon some accounts very much a resemblance of the salvation of Christ. The children of Israel were saved by

Joseph their kinsman and brother, from perishing by famine; as he that saves the souls of the spiritual Israel from spiritual famine is their near kinsman, and one that is not ashamed to call them brethren. Joseph was a brother they had hated, sold, and as it were killed; for they had designed to kill him. So Christ is one that we naturally hate, and by our wicked lives, have sold for the vain things of the world, and by our sins have slain. Joseph was first in a state of humiliation; he was a servant, as Christ appeared in the form of a servant; and then was cast into a dungeon, as Christ descended into the grave. When he rose out of the dungeon, he was in a state of great exaltation, at the king's right hand as his deputy, to reign over all his kingdom, to provide food, to preserve life; and being in this state of exaltation, he dispenses food to his brethren, and so gives them life. So Christ was exalted at God's right hand to be a Prince and Saviour to his brethren, received gifts for men, even for the rebellious, them that had hated and sold him.

VII. After this there was a prophecy of Christ, on some accounts more particular than any before, in Jacob's blessing his son Judah. This was more particular as it showed of whose posterity he was to be. When God called Abraham, it was revealed that he was to be of Abraham's posterity. Before, we have no account of any revelation concerning Christ's pedigree confined to narrower limits than the posterity of Noah: after this it was confined to still narrower limits; for though Abraham had many sons, yet it was revealed, that Christ was to be of Isaac's posterity. And then it was limited still more; for when Isaac had two sons, it was revealed that Christ was to be of Israel's posterity. And now, though Israel had twelve sons, yet it is revealed that Christ should be of Judah's posterity. Christ is the lion of the tribe of Judah. Respect is chiefly had to his great acts, when it is said here, Gen. xlix. 8. "Judah, thou art he whom thy brethren shall praise: thy hand shall be in the neck of thine enemies; thy father's children shall bow down before thee. Judah is a lion's whelp; from the prey, my son, thou art gone up: he stooped down, he couched as a lion, and as an old lion; who shall rouse him up?" And then this prediction is more particular concerning the time of Christ's coming, as in verse 10. "The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be." The prophecy here, of the calling of the Gentiles consequent on Christ's coming, seems to be more plain than any had been before, in the expression, "to him shall the gathering of the people be." Thus you see how that gospel light which dawned immediately after the fall of man, gradually increases.

VIII. The work of redemption was carried on in this period, in God's wonderfully perserving the children of Israel in

Egypt, when the power of Egypt was engaged utterly to destroy them. They seemed to be wholly in the hands of the Egyptians; they were their servants, and were subject to the power of Pharaoh: and Pharaoh set himself to weaken them with hard bondage. And when he saw that did not do, he set himself to extirpate their race, by commanding that every male child should be drowned. But after all that Pharaoh could do, God wonderfully preserved them; and not only so, but increased them exceedingly; so that, instead of being extirpated, they greatly multiplied.

IX. Here is to be observed, not only the preservation of the nation, but God's wonderfully persevering and upholding his invisible church in that nation, when in danger of being overwhelmed in the idolatry of Egypt. The children of Israel being long among the Egyptians, and servants under them, and so not having advantages to keep God's ordinances among themselves, and maintain any public worship or instruction, whereby the true religion might be upheld; and there being now no written word, they by degrees, in a great measure, lost the true religion, and borrowed the idolatry of Egypt; and the greater part of the people fell away to the worship of their gods. This we learn by Ezek. xx. 6, 7, 8. and by chap. xxiii. 8.

This now was the third time that God's church was almost swallowed up and carried away with the wickedness of the world, once before the flood; the other time, before the calling of Abraham; and now, the third time in Egypt. But yet God did not suffer his church to be quite overwhelmed: he still saved it, like the ark in the flood, and as he saved Moses in the midst of the waters, in an ark of bulrushes, where he was in the utmost danger of being swallowed up. The true religion was still kept up with some: and God had still a people among them, even in this miserable, corrupt, and dark time. The parents of Moses were true servants of God, as we may learn, by Heb. xi. 23. "By faith Moses, when he was born, was hid three months of his parents, because they saw that he was a proper child: and they were not afraid of the king's commandment."

I have now shown how the work of redemption was carried on from the calling of Abraham to Moses; in which we have seen many great things done towards this work, and a great advancement of this building, beyond what had preceded.

PART IV.

From Moses to David.

I PROCEED to the time which reaches from Moses to David.

I. The first thing that offers itself is the redemption of the church of God out of Egypt; the most remarkable of all in the Old Testament, the greatest pledge and forerunner of the future redemption by Christ, and much more insisted on in scripture than any other of those redemptions. And indeed it was the greatest type of Christ's redemption of any providential event whatsoever. This was by Jesus Christ, for it was wrought by him who appeared to Moses in the bush; the person that sent Moses to redeem that people. But that was Christ, as is evident, because he is called *the angel of the Lord*, Exod. iii. 2, 3. The bush represented the human nature of Christ, who is called the *branch*. This bush grew on Mount Sinai or Horeb, a word that signifies a dry place, as the human nature of Christ was a root out of a dry ground. The bush burning with fire, represented the sufferings of Christ, in the fire of God's wrath. It burned, and was not consumed: so Christ, though he suffered extremely, yet perished not; but overcame at last, and rose from his sufferings. Because this great mystery of the incarnation and sufferings of Christ was here represented, therefore Moses says, "I will turn aside, and behold this great sight." A great sight he might well call it, when there was represented, *God manifest in the flesh*, suffering a dreadful death, and rising from the dead.

This was the glorious Redeemer who redeemed the church out of Egypt, from under the hand of Pharaoh; as Christ, by his death and sufferings, redeemed his people from Satan, the spiritual Pharaoh. He redeemed them from hard service and cruel drudgery; so Christ redeems his people from the cruel slavery of sin and Satan. He redeemed them, as it is said, *from the iron furnace;* so Christ redeems his church from a furnace of fire and everlasting burnings.—He redeemed them with a strong hand and outstretched arm, and great and terrible judgments on their enemies; so Christ with mighty power triumphs over *principalities* and *powers*, and executes terrible judgments on his church's enemies, bruising the serpent's head. He saved them when others were destroyed, by the sprinkling of the blood of the paschal lamb; so God's church is saved from death by the sprinkling of the blood of Christ, when the rest of the world is destroyed. God brought forth the people sorely against the will of the Egyptians, when they could not bear to

let them go; so Christ rescues his people out of the hands of the devil, sorely against his will, when his proud heart cannot bear to be overcome.

In that redemption, Christ did not only redeem the people from the Egyptians, but he redeemed them from the devils, the gods of Egypt; for before they had been in a state of servitude to the gods of Egypt, as well as to the men. And Christ, the seed of the woman, did now, in a very remarkable manner, fulfil the curse on the serpent, in bruising his head: Exod. xiii. 12 "For I will pass through the land of Egypt this night, and will smite all the first born in the land of Egypt, both man and beast, and against all the gods of Egypt will I execute judgment." Hell was as much, nay more engaged in that affair, than Egypt was. The pride and cruelty of Satan, that old serpent, was more concerned in it than Pharaoh's. He did his utmost against the people, and to his utmost opposed their redemption. But it is said, that when God redeemed his people out of Egypt, he "broke the heads of the dragons in the waters, and broke the head of Leviathan in pieces, and gave him to be meat for the people inhabiting the wilderness," Psalm lxxiv. 12—14. God forced their enemies to let them go, that they might serve him; as Zacharias observes with respect to the church under the gospel, Luke i. 74, 75.

The people of Israel went out with a high hand, and Christ went before them in a pillar of cloud and fire. There was a glorious triumph over earth and hell in that deliverance. When Pharaoh and his hosts, and Satan by them, pursued the people, Christ overthrew them in the Red Sea: the Lord triumphed gloriously: the horse and his rider he cast into the sea, and there they slept their sleep, and never followed the children of Israel any more. The Red Sea represented Christ's blood, because the apostle compares the children of Israel's passage through the Red Sea to baptism, 1 Cor. x. 1, 2.—But we all know that the water of baptism represents Christ's blood.

Thus Christ, the angel of God's presence, in his love and his pity, redeemed his people, and carried them in the days of old as on eagle's wings, so that none of their proud and spiteful enemies, neither Egyptians nor devils, could touch them.

This was quite a new thing that God did towards this great work of redemption. God never had done any thing like it before; Deut. iv. 32, 34. This was a great advancement of the work that had been begun and carried on from the fall of man; a great step taken in divine providence towards a preparation for Christ's coming into the world, and

working out his great and eternal redemption; for this was the people of whom Christ was to come. And now we may see how that plant flourished which God had planted in Abraham. Though the family of which Christ was to come, had been in a degree separated from the rest of the world before, in the calling of Abraham; yet that separation appeared not to be sufficient. For though by that separation, they were kept, as strangers and sojourners, from being united with other people in the same political societies; yet they remained mixed among them, by which means they had been in danger of wholly losing the true religion, and of being overrun with the idolatry of their neighbours. God now, therefore, by this redemption, separated them as a nation from all others, to subsist by themselves in their own political and ecclesiastical state, without having any concern with the Heathen nations, that the church of Christ might be upheld, and might keep the oracles of God; that in them might be kept up those types and prophecies of Christ and those histories and other divine previous instructions, which were necessary to prepare the way for Christ's coming.

II. As this people were separated to be God's peculiar people, so all other people upon the face of the whole earth were wholly rejected and given over to Heathenism. This was one thing that God ordered in his providence to prepare the way for Christ's coming, and the great salvation he was to accomplish; for it was only to prepare the way for the more glorious and signal victory and triumph of Christ's power and grace over the wicked and miserable world, and that Christ's salvation of mankind might become the more sensible. This is the account the scripture itself gives us of the matter, Rom. xi. 30, 32. The apostle, speaking to the Gentiles that had formerly been Heathens, says, "As ye in times past have not believed God, yet have now obtained mercy through their unbelief; even so have these also now not believed, that through your mercy they may also obtain mercy. For God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all:" *i. e.* It was the will of God, that the whole world, Jews and Gentiles, should be concluded in visible and professed unbelief, that so God's mercy and Christ's salvation towards them all might be visible. For the apostle is not speaking only of that unbelief that is natural to all God's professing people as well as others, but that which appears, and is visible; such as the Jews fell into when they openly rejected Christ, and ceased to be a professing people. The apostle observes, how that first the Gentiles, even the Gentile nations, were included in a professed unbelief and open opposition to the true religion, before Christ came to prepare the way for the calling of

the Gentiles, which was soon after Christ came, in order that God's mercy might be the more visible to them; and that the Jews were rejected and apostatized from the visible church, to prepare the way for the calling of the Jews, which shall be in the latter days. So that it may be seen concerning all nations, Jews and Gentiles, that are redeemed by Christ, from being visibly aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, without hope, and without God in the world.

We cannot certainly determine precisely at what time the apostacy of the Gentile nations from the true God, or their being concluded in visible unbelief, became universal. Their falling away was a gradual thing, as we observed before. It was general in Abraham's time, but not universal: for then we find Melchisedec, one of the kings of Canaan, was priest of the most high God. And after this the true religion was kept up for a while among some of the rest of Abraham's posterity, besides the family of Jacob: and also in some of the posterity of Nahor, as we have instances in Job, and his three friends, and Elihu. The land of Uz, where Job lived, was possessed by the posterity of Uz, or Huz, the son of Nahor, Abraham's brother, of whom we read, Gen. xxii. 21. Bildad the Shuhite was of the offspring of Shuah, Abraham's son by Keturah, Gen. xxv. 1, 2; and Elihu the Buzite, was of Buz the son of Nahor, the brother of Abraham. So the true religion lasted among some other people, besides the Israelites, a while after Abraham. But it did not last long: and it is probable that their total rejection, and giving up to idolatry, was about the time when God separated the children of Israel from Egypt to serve him. For they are often put in mind on that occasion, that God had now separated them to be his peculiar people, or to be distinguished from all other people upon earth, to be his people alone; to be his portion, when others were rejected. This seems to imply, that God now chose them in such a manner as was accompanied with a visible rejection of all other nations in the world; that God visibly came, and took up his residence with them, forsaking all other nations. As the first calling of the Gentiles, after Christ came, was accompanied with a rejection of the Jews; so the first calling of the Jews to be God's people, when they left Egypt, was accompanied with a rejection of the Gentiles.

Thus all the nations in the world, except the Israelites, and those who embodied themselves with them, were given up to idolatry; and so continued till Christ came, which was about fifteen hundred years. They were concluded so long a time in unbelief, that there might be a thorough proof of the necessity of a Saviour; that it might appear by so long a trial, past all contradiction, that mankind were utterly insufficient to deliver themselves from that gross darkness and misery, and

subjection to the devil; that all the wisdom of the heathen philosophers, could not deliver them from their darkness, for the greater glory to Jesus Christ, who, when he came, enlightened and delivered them by his glorious gospel. Herein the wonderful wisdom of God appeared, in thus preparing the way for Christ's redemption. This the scripture teaches us 1 Cor. i. 21. "For after that, in the wisdom of God, the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe."

III. The next thing done towards the work of redemption, is God's giving the moral law in so awful a manner at Mount Sinai. This was another new step taken in this great affair. Deut. iv. 33. "Did ever people hear the voice of God speaking out of the midst of the fire, as thou hast heard, and live?" And it was a great thing, whether we consider it as a new exhibition of the covenant of works, or given as a rule of life.

The covenant of works was here exhibited as a schoolmaster to lead to Christ, not only for the use of that nation, under the Old Testament, but for the use of God's church throughout all ages of the world. It is an instrument that the great Redeemer makes use of to convince men of their sin, misery, and helpless state, and of God's awful and tremendous majesty and justice as a lawgiver, in order to make men sensible of the necessity of Christ as a Saviour. This work of redemption, in its saving effect on men's souls, in all its progress, is not carried on without the use of this law delivered at Sinai.

It was given in an awful manner, with a terrible voice, exceedingly loud and awful, so that all the people in the camp trembled; and even Moses himself, though so intimate a friend of God, said, *I exceedingly fear and quake.* The voice was accompanied with thunders and lightnings, the mountain burning with fire to the midst of heaven, and the earth itself shaking and trembling. This was done in order to make all sensible how great that authority, power, and justice were, that stood engaged to exact the fulfilment of this law, and to see it fully executed. Here might be understood, how strictly God would require the fulfilment, and how terrible his wrath would be against every transgressor. Men, being sensible of these things, might thoroughly prove their own hearts, and know how impossible it is for them to obtain salvation by the works of the law, and be assured of their absolute need of a mediator.

If we regard the law given at Mount Sinai—not as a covenant of works, but—as a rule of life, it is employed by the Redeemer, from that time to the end of the world, as a directory to his people, to show them the way in which they must walk, as they would go to heaven: for a way of sincere

and universal obedience to this law is the narrow way that leads to life.

IV. The next thing observable in this period, was God's giving the *typical* law, those precepts that did not properly belong to the *moral* law. Not only those laws which are commonly called *ceremonial*, which prescribe the ceremonies and circumstances of the Jewish worship, and their ecclesiastical state; but also those that were political, for regulating the Jewish commonwealth, commonly called *judicial* laws, were many of them typical. The giving this typical law was another great thing that God did in this period, tending to build up the glorious structure of redemption. There had been many typical events of providence before, that represented Christ and his redemption, and some typical ordinances, as particularly those two of sacrifices and circumcision: but now, instead of representing the great Redeemer in a few institutions, God enacts a law full of typical representations of good things to come. By these that nation were directed every year, month, and day, in their religious actions, and in their conduct, in all that appertained to their ecclesiastical and civil state, to something of Christ; one observance exhibiting one doctrine, or one benefit; another, another; so that the whole nation by this law was, as it were, constituted in a typical state. Thus the gospel was abunddantly held forth to that nation; so there is scarce any doctrine of it, but is particularly taught and exhibited by some observance of this law; though it was in shadows, and under a vail, as Moses put a vail on his face when it shone.—To this typical law belong all the precepts which relate to building the tabernacle, set up in the wilderness, and all its form, circumstances, and utensils.

V. About this time was given to the church the first written word of God. This was another great thing done towards the affair of redemption, a new and glorious advancement of the building; which God has given for the regulation of faith, worship and practice, to the end of the world. This rule grew, and was added to from that time, for many ages, till it was finished, and the canon of scripture completed by the apostle John. It is not very material, whether the first written word was the ten commandments, written on the tables of stone with the finger of God, or the book of Job; and whether the book of Job was written by Moses, as some suppose, or by Elihu, as others. If it was written by Elihu, it must have been before this period; but yet could not be far from it, as appears by considering whose posterity the persons spoken of in it were, together with Job's great age, before it was written.

The written word of God is the main instrument employed

by Christ, in order to carry on his work of redemption in all ages. There was a necessity now of the word of God being committed to writing, for a steady rule to God's church. Before this, the church had the word by tradition, either by immediate tradition from eminent men inspired, that were living, or else by tradition from former generations, which might be had with tolerable certainty in ages preceding this, by reason of men's long lives. Noah might converse with Adam, and receive traditions from him; and Noah lived till about Abraham's time: and the sons of Jacob lived a considerable time to deliver the revelations made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to their posterity in Egypt. But the distance from the beginning of things was become now so great, and the lives of men become so short—being brought down to the present standard about the time of Moses—and God having now separated a nation to be a peculiar people, to be the keepers of the oracles of God; God saw it to be a convenient time now to commit his word to writing, to remain henceforward for a steady rule throughout all ages. And therefore, besides the book of Job, Christ wrote the ten commandments on tables of stone, with his own finger. After this, the whole law, as containing the substance of the five books of Moses, was by God's special command committed to writing, which was called "the book of the law," and was laid up in the tabernacle, to be kept there for the use of the church, Deut. xxxi. 24—26.

VI. God was pleased now wonderfully to represent the progress of his redeemed church through the world to their eternal inheritance, by the journey of the children of Israel through the wilderness, from Egypt to Canaan. Here all the various steps of the redemption of the church by Christ were represented, from the beginning to its consummation in glory. The state they are redeemed from is represented by Egypt, and their bondage there, which they left. The purchase of their redemption was represented by the sacrifice of the paschal lamb, which was offered up that night in which God slew all the first-born of Egypt. The beginning of the application of the redemption of Christ's church in their conversion, was represented by Israel's going out of Egypt, and passing through the Red Sea in so extraordinary and miraculous a manner. The travel of the church through this evil world, and the various changes through which the church passes, was represented by the journey of the Israelites through the wilderness. The manner of their being conducted by Christ, was represented by the Israelites being led by the pillar of cloud by day, and the pillar of fire by night. The manner of the church's being supported in their progress, supplied with spiritual food, and daily communications from

God, was represented by his supplying the children of Israel with *manna* from heaven, and water out of the rock. The dangers that the saints must meet with in their course through the world, were represented by the fiery flying serpents in the wilderness. The conflicts the church has with her enemies, were represented by their battle with the Amalekites and others. And innumerable other particulars might be mentioned, which were lively images of what the church and saints meet with in all ages of the world. That these things were typical, is manifest from 1 Cor. x. 11. "Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples, and they were written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come." Here the apostle is speaking of those very things which we have now mentioned, and he says expressly, that they happened unto them for *types*; so it is in the original.

VII. Another thing here must not be omitted, which was a great and remarkable dispensation of Providence, respecting the whole world of mankind, in this period; viz. the shortening of man's life. It was now brought down from being between nine hundred and a thousand years, to about seventy or eighty. The life of man began to be shortened immediately after the flood. It was brought down the first generation to six hundred years, and the next to between four and five hundred years. So the life of man gradually grew shorter and shorter, till about the time of the great mortality which was in the congregation of Israel, after they had murmured at the report of the spies, and their carcasses fell in the wilderness, whereby all the men of war died. Then the life of man was reduced to its present standard, as Moses observes in that psalm which he wrote on occasion of that mortality: Psalm xc. 10. "The days of our years are three score years and ten; and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet is their strength labour and sorrow; for it is soon cut off, and we fly away."

Man's life being cut so very short, tended to prepare the way for poor short-lived men, the more joyfully to entertain the glad tidings of everlasting life, *brought to light by the gospel;* and more readily to embrace a Saviour, that purchases and offers such a blessing. If men's lives were still commonly about nine hundred years, how much less would be the inducement to regard the proffers of a future life; how much greater the temptation to rest in the things of this world, and to neglect any other life but this? This probably contributed greatly to the wickedness of the antediluvians. But now how much greater motives have men to seek redemption, and a better life than this, by the great Redeemer, since the life of man is not one-twelfth part of what it used to be, and

men now universally die at the age when formerly they used to be but setting out in the world.

VIII. The same work was carried on in preserving that people of whom Christ was to come, from totally perishing in the wilderness, by a constant miracle of forty years' continuance. I observed before how God preserved those of whom the Redeemer was to proceed in a very wonderful manner; as Noah and his family from the flood; Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, with their families, from the wicked inhabitants of Canaan; and Jacob and his family from perishing by the famine, by Joseph in Egypt. But this preservation of Israel in the wilderness, was on some accounts more remarkable than any of them; for it was by a continual miracle of so long duration. There was, as may be fairly computed, at first two millions of souls in that congregation. But if miraculous support had been withheld, they must all have perished, in less than a month's time, so that there would not have been one of them left. But yet this vast multitude subsisted for forty years together, in a dry barren wilderness, without sowing, reaping, or tillage. Their bread was daily rained down to them out of heaven, and they were furnished with water out of a rock; and the same clothes with which they came out of Egypt, lasted all that time. Never was any instance like this, of a nation being so upheld for so long a time together. Thus God upheld his church by a continual miracle, and kept alive that people in whom was the blessing, the great Redeemer of the world.

IX. God was pleased, during this time, to give a further revelation of Christ the Redeemer in the predictions of him. Three prophecies deserve particular notice. The first is that of Balaam, Numb. xxiv. 17—19. "I shall see him, but not now; I shall behold him, but not nigh: there shall come a Star out of Jacob, and a Sceptre shall rise out of Israel, and shall smite the corners of Moab, and destroy all the children of Sheth. And Edom shall be a possession, Seir also shall be a possession for his enemies, and Israel shall do valiantly. Out of Jacob shall come he that shall have dominion, and shall destroy him that remaineth of the city." This is a plainer prophecy of Christ, especially with regard to his kingly office, than any former one. But we have another, that God gave by Moses, plainer still, especially with regard to his prophetical office, in Deut. xviii. 18, &c. "I will raise up a prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth, and he shall speak unto them all that I command him, &c." This is a plainer prophecy of Christ than any before. All the preceding prophecies were in figurative, mystical language. The first prophecy was so, That the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head. The promises made to

Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, That *in their seed all the families of the earth should be blessed*, were also mystical; and not so particular, because the expression, *thy seed*, is general, and not plainly limited to any particular person The prophecy of Jacob in blessing Judah, (Gen. xlix. 8.) is in mystical language; and so is that of Balaam, which speaks of Christ under the figurative expression of a *star*. But this is a plain prophecy, without being veiled at all in any mystical language.

There are several things contained in this prophecy of Christ. Here is his mediatorial office in general, ver. 16. Here it is revealed how he should be a person to stand between them and God, a being of such awful majesty, holiness, and justice, that they could not have come to him, and have intercourse with him immediately, without a mediator to stand between them; because, if they came to such a sin-revenging God immediately, they should die; God would prove a consuming fire to them. And here is a particular revelation of Christ, with respect to his prophetical office: *I will raise them up a prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee*, &c. And further, it is revealed what kind of a prophet he should be; a prophet like unto Moses, who was the head and leader of all the people, and who under God, had been their redeemer, to bring them out of the house of bondage. He was their shepherd, by whom God led them through the Red Sea and the wilderness, was an intercessor for them with God, and was both a prophet and a king in the congregation: for Moses had the power of a king among them. It is said of him, (Deut. xxxiii. 5.) that *he was king in Jeshurun*, was the prophet by whom God built up his church, and delivered his instructions of worship. Thus Christ was to be a prophet like unto Moses; so that this is both the plainest and fullest prophecy of Christ that ever had been from the beginning of the world to this time.

The next prophecy respects the calling of the Gentiles, which should be after Christ's coming, Deut. xxxii. 21. Here is a very plain prophecy of the rejection of the Jews and calling the Gentiles. As they moved *God* to jealousy, by that which was not God, by casting him off, and taking others that were no gods in his room; so God declares that he will move *them* to jealousy in like manner, by casting them off, and taking others, who had not been his people, in their room. The Apostle Paul takes notice of this prophecy, as foretelling the calling of the Gentiles, in Rom. x. 19, 20. "But I say, Did not Israel know? First, Moses saith, I will provoke you to jealousy by them that are no people, and by a foolish nation I will anger you. But Esaias is very bold, and saith, I was found of them that sought me not; I was made manifest to them that asked not after me."

Thus you see how the light of the gospel, which first began to dawn and glimmer immediately after the fall, gradually increases the nearer we come to Christ's time.

X. Another thing by which God carried on this work in this time, was a remarkable pouring out of his spirit on the young generation in the wilderness. The generation that was grown up when they came out of Egypt, from twenty years old and upward, was a very froward and perverse generation. They were tainted with the idolatry and wickedness of Egypt, and were not weaned from it. Ezek. xx. 6—8. Hence they made the golden calf in imitation of the idolatry of Egypt, that was wont to worship a bull or an ox; and therefore cattle are called *the abomination of the Egyptians; i. e.* their idol. With this generation God was exceedingly angry, and swore in his wrath, that they should not enter into his rest. But the younger generation, who were under twenty years old when they came out of Egypt, were not so, Numb. xiv. 31. "But your little ones, whom ye said should be a prey, them will I bring in; and they shall know the land that ye have despised." This was the generation with whom the covenant was renewed, as we have an account in Deuteronomy, and that entered into the land of Canaan. This generation God was pleased to make a people to his praise, and they were eminent for piety; as appears by many things said about them; particularly, Jer. ii. 2, 3. "I remember thee, the kindness of thy youth, the love of thine espousals, when thou wentest after me in the wilderness, in a land that was not sown. Israel was holiness to the Lord, and the first-fruits of his increase." Here the generation that went after God in the wilderness, is spoken of with very high commendations, as eminent for holiness. Their love to God is distinguished like the love of a bride at her espousals, when they followed him through that dreadful wilderness, after they went back from Kadesh-Barnea, Deut. viii. 15. "Who led thee through the great and terrible wilderness, wherein were fiery serpents, and scorpions, and drought, where there was no water." Though this generation had a much greater trial, than the generation of their fathers had before they came to Kadesh-Barnea, yet they never murmured against God, as their fathers had done: but their trials had a contrary effect upon them, to awaken, convince, and humble them, and fit them for great mercy. They were awakened by those awful judgments of God, inflicted on their fathers, whereby their carcasses fell in the wilderness. God poured out his spirit with those awakening providences, and their own travel in the wilderness, and the word preached to them by Moses; whereby they were humbled, and at length multitudes of them were savingly converted; as Deut. viii. 2, 3. "And thou shalt remember the way which the Lord thy

God led thee these forty years in the wilderness, to humble thee, and to prove thee, to know what was in thine heart, whether thou wouldst keep his commandments or no. And he humbled thee," &c. And ver. 15. "Who led thee through that great and terrible wilderness,—that he might humble thee, and that he might prove thee, to do thee good at thy latter end." And therefore it is said, Hos. xiii. 5. "I did know thee in the wilderness, in the land of great drought." God allured them, and brought them into that wilderness, and spake comfortably to them, as it was foretold that he would do afterwards, Hos. ii. 14.

Those terrible judgments that were executed in the congregation after their turning back from Kadesh-Barnea, in the matter of Korah, and the matter of Peor, were chiefly on the *old* generation, whom God consumed in the wilderness. Those rebellions were chiefly among the elders of the congregation, who were given up to their hearts' lust; and they walked in their own counsels, and God was grieved with their manners forty years in the wilderness.

That this younger congregation were eminent for piety, appears by all their history. The former generation were wicked, and were followed with curses; but this was holy, and wonderful blessings followed them. God did great things for them; he fought for them, and gave them the possession of Canaan. And it is God's manner, when he hath very great mercies to bestow on a visible people, first, to fit them for such mercies, and then to confer them. So it was here: They believed in God, and by faith overcame Sihon and Og, and the giants of Canaan; and are commended for cleaving to the Lord: Josh. xxiii. 8. Joshua says unto them, "Cleave unto the Lord, as ye have done unto this day." But when Joshua and all that generation were dead, there arose another that knew not the Lord. This pious generation showed a laudable and fervent zeal for God on several occasions; as on occasion of Achan's sin; but especially when they suspected the two tribes and a half had set up an altar in opposition to the altar of burnt-offering. There never was any generation of Israel of which so much good and so little evil is mentioned. It is further observable, that in the time of this generation was the second general circumcision, whereby the reproach of Israel was fully rolled away, and they became pure; and when afterwards they were polluted by Achan, they purged themselves again.

The men of the former generation being dead, and God having sanctified this to himself, he solemnly renewed his covenant with them, as we have a particular account in the 29th chapter of Deuteronomy. We find that such solemn renovations of the covenant commonly accompanied any remarkable pour-

ing out of the Spirit, causing a general reformation: so we find it was in Hezekiah's and Josiah's times. It is questionable whether there ever was a time of so great a flourishing of religion in the Israelitish church, as in that generation; and as, in the Christian church, religion was in its most flourishing circumstances in the day of its espousals, in the apostles' days, so it seems to have been with the Jewish church in the days of its first establishment in the times of Moses and Joshua.

Thus God, at this time, gloriously advanced the work of redemption, both by his word and Spirit. Hereby the work of redemption was promoted, not only as it was in itself a glorious instance of redemption in its application, but as this was what God used for the orderly establishment of the Israelitish church, when it was first settled in the regular observance of God's ordinances in Canaan: even as the pouring out of the Spirit, in the beginning of the Christian church, was a great means for establishing the Christian church in all succeeding ages.

XI. The next thing I would observe, was God's bringing the people of Israel by Joshua, and settling them in that land where Christ was to be born, and which was the great type of the heavenly Canaan, which Christ has purchased. Joshua was of Joseph's posterity, and was an eminent type of Christ, and is therefore called the shepherd, the stone of Israel. Gen. xlix. 24. Being such a type, he bore the name of Christ. Joshua and Jesus are the same name, the one Hebrew, the other Greek: and therefore, in the New Testament, originally written in Greek, Joshua is called Jesus, Acts vii. 45. "Which also our fathers brought in with Jesus," *i. e.* Joshua; Heb. iv. 8. "If Jesus had given them rest, he would not have spoken of another day:" *i. e.* If Joshua had given them rest.

God wonderfully gave his people possession of this land, conquering its former inhabitants, and the mighty giants, as Christ conquered the devil. He first conquered the great kings on the eastern side of Jordan, Sihon king of the Amorites, and Og king of Bashan; and then divided the river Jordan, as before he had done the Red Sea; causing the walls of Jericho to fall down at the sound of the trumpets of the priests. That sound typified the sound of the gospel by the preaching of gospel ministers, the walls of the accursed city Jericho signifying the walls of Satan's kingdom. After this he wonderfully destroyed the mighty host of the Amorites under the five kings, causing the sun and moon to stand still, to help the people against their enemies, at the prayer of the typical Jesus; plainly intimating, that God would make the whole course of nature to be subservient to the affair of redemption; and that every thing should give place to the welfare of God's redeemed people.

Thus did Christ show his great love to his elect, that he would make the course of nature to give place to their happiness and prosperity: and showed that the sun and moon, and all things visible and invisible, were theirs by his purchase. At the same time, Christ fought as the captain of their host, and cast down great hailstones upon their enemies, by which more were slain than by the sword of Israel. And after this Christ gave the people a mighty victory over a yet greater army in the northern part of the land, gathered together at the waters of Merom, as the sand of the sea shore, Josh. xi. 4.

Thus God gave the people whence Christ was to proceed, the land where he was to be born; where he was to live, preach, and work miracles; to die, and rise again; and whence he was to ascend into heaven, as the land which was a great type of heaven.

XII. Another thing that God did towards carrying on this affair, was his actually setting up his stated worship among the people, as it had been before instituted in the wilderness. This worship was appointed at Mount Sinai; it was to make way for the coming of Christ; and the innumerable ceremonial observances of it were typical of him and his redemption. But there were many parts of their instituted worship that could not be observed in the wilderness, by reason of their unsettled state there. And there were many precepts that respected the land of Canaan, and their places of habitation there; which therefore could not be put in practice, till they came into that land. But now, when this was brought to pass, God set up his tabernacle in the midst of his people, as he had before promised them. Lev. xxvi. 11. "I will set my tabernacle amongst you." The tabernacle was set up at Shiloh, Josh. xviii. 1. and the priests and the Levites had their offices appointed them, and the cities of refuge, and now the people were in a condition to observe their feasts of the first-fruits, and their feasts of ingathering, and to bring all their tithes and appointed offerings to the Lord; and most parts of God's worship were set up, though there were some things that were not observed till afterwards.

XIII. The next thing was God's wonderfully preserving that people, from this time forward, when all the males went up, three times in the year, to the place where God's ark was. The people of Israel were generally surrounded with enemies, who sought all opportunities to destroy them, and dispossess them of their land. Till David's time, there were great numbers in the land of the remains of the Canaanites, and the other former inhabitants of the land, who were bitter enemies to the people of Israel: and these had three times in the year, a fair opportunity of overrunning their country, and getting possession of their cities, when only the women, and those who were

not able to go up, were left behind. And yet they were remarkably preserved throughout all generations at such seasons, agreeably to the promise, Exod. xxxiv. 24. "Neither shall any man desire thy land, when thou shalt go up to appear before the Lord thy God thrice in the year." So wonderfully did God order affairs, and influence the hearts of their enemies. They were full of enmity against Israel, desired to dispossess them of their land, and often had so fair an opportunity, that the whole country was left naked and empty of all that could resist them. It would have been only for them to go and take possession; and yet we never read, in all their history, of any of their enemies taking these opportunities against them; which could be no less than a continual miracle, which God, for the preservation of his church, kept up for so many generations. It was surely a wonderful dispensation of divine providence to maintain and promote God's great design of redemption.

XIV. God's preserving his church and the true religion from being wholly extinct in the frequent apostacies of the Israelites in the time of the judges. How prone was that people to forsake the true God, who had done such wonderful things for them, and to fall into idolatry! and how did the land, from time to time, seem to be almost overrun with it! But yet God never suffered his true worship to be totally rooted out: his tabernacle stood, the ark was preserved, the book of the law was kept from being destroyed, God's priesthood was upheld, and he still had a church among the people. Time after time, when religion seemed to be almost gone, then God granted a revival, and sent some angel, or raised up some eminent person, to be an instrument of their reformation.

XV. God's preserving that nation from being destroyed, although they were so often subdued and brought under the dominion of their enemies. It was a wonder, not only that the true religion was not wholly rooted out, and so the church destroyed that way; but also that the very nation in which that church was, was not utterly destroyed; they were so often brought under the power of their enemies. One while they were subdued by Chushan-rishathaim, king of Mesopotamia, another while they were brought under the Moabites; now they *were sold into the hand* of Jabin, king of Canaan; then they were under the dominion of the Midianites; now they were sorely distressed by the children of Ammon; and then by the Philistines. But yet God, in all these dangers, preserved them, and kept them from being wholly overthrown. From time to time, when it was come to extremity, and God saw that they were upon the very brink of ruin, then he raised up a deliverer, agreeable to Deut. xxxii. 36. "For the Lord shall

judge his people, and repent himself for his servants; when he seeth their power is gone, and there is none shut up or left."—Those remarkable dispensations of Providence are very elegantly set forth by the Psalmist, Psal. cvi. 34, &c.—These deliverers were all types of Christ, the great redeemer and deliverer of his church; and some of them very remarkably so; as, Barak, Jeptha, Gideon, and Samson, in very many particulars; and above all in the acts of Samson, as might be shown, were it not that this would take up too much time.

XVI. It is observable, that when Christ appeared to manage the affairs of his church in this period, he often appeared in the form of that nature which he took upon him in his incarnation. So he seems to have appeared repeatedly to Moses, and particularly at that time when God spake to him face to face, as a man speaketh to his friend, and he beheld the similitude of the Lord, (Numb. xii. 8.) after he had besought him to show him his glory; which was the most remarkable vision that ever he had of Christ. There was a twofold discovery that Moses had of Christ: one was spiritual, made to his mind, by the word that was proclaimed: "The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and to the fourth generation." Exod. xxxiv. 6, &c. Another was external; which was that which Moses saw, when Christ passed by, and put him in a cleft of the rock. What he saw was doubtless a glorious human form, in which Christ appeared to him, and in all likelihood the form of his glorified human nature, in which he should afterwards appear. He saw not his face; for it is not to be supposed that any man could subsist under a sight of the glory of Christ's human nature as it now appears.

So it was a human form in which Christ appeared to the seventy elders, of which we have an account, Exod. xxiv. 9. 11. "Then went up Moses and Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel. And they saw the God of Israel: and there was under his feet, as it were, a paved work of a sapphire-stone, and as it were the body of heaven in his clearness. And upon the nobles of the children of Israel he laid not his hand: also they saw God, and did eat and drink." So Christ appeared afterwards to Joshua in the form of the human nature, Josh. v. 13, 14. "And it came to pass when Joshua was by Jericho, he lift up his eyes, and looked, and behold, there stood a man over against him, with his sword drawn in his hand: and Joshua went unto him, and said unto him, Art thou for us, or for our adversaries? And he said, Nay, but as

Captain of the host of the Lord I now come." And so he appeared to Gideon, Judg. vi. 11. &c. and so also to Manoah, Judg. xiii. 17—21. Here Christ appeared to Manoah in a representation both of his incarnation and death; of his incarnation, in that he appeared in a human form; and of his death and sufferings, represented by the sacrifice of a kid, and by his ascending up in the flame of the sacrifice; intimating, that it was he that was the great sacrifice, that must be offered up to God for a sweet savour, in the fire of his wrath, as that kid was burned and ascended up in the flame. *Thus Christ appeared time after time, in the form of that nature he was afterwards to assume; because he now appeared on the same design and to carry on the same work.*

XVII. Another thing I would mention, done in this period towards the work of redemption, is the beginning of a succession of prophets, and erecting a school of the prophets, in Samuel's time. There was something of this spirit of prophecy in Israel after Moses, before Samuel. Joshua and many of the judges had a degree of it. Deborah was a prophetess; and some of the high-priests were inspired with this spirit; particularly Eli. That space of time was not wholly without instances of those that were set apart of God especially to this office, and so were called prophets. Such an one we read of, Judg. vi. 8. "The Lord sent a prophet unto the children of Israel, which said unto them," &c. Such an one he seems to have been of whom we read, 1. Sam. ii. 27. "And there came a man of God to Eli," &c.

But there was no such order of men upheld in Israel, for any constancy, before Samuel: the want of it is taken notice of in 1 Sam. iii. 1. "And the word of the Lord was precious in those days; there was no open vision." But in Samuel there was begun a *succession* of prophets, maintained continually from that time, at least with very little interruption, till the spirit of prophecy ceased, about Malachi's time: and therefore Samuel is spoken of in the New Testament as the beginning of this succession of prophets, Acts iii. 24. "And all the prophets from Samuel, and those that follow after, as many as have spoken, have foretold of these days." After Samuel was Nathan, and Gad, Iddo, and Heman, Asaph, and others. And afterwards, in the latter end of Solomon's reign, we read of Ahijah; and in Jeroboam and Rehoboam's time, we read of prophets; and so continually one prophet succeeded another till the captivity. In the writings of those prophets who are inserted in the canon of scripture, we read of prophets as being a constant order of men upheld in the land. And even during the captivity there were prophets still, as Ezekiel and Daniel; and after the captivity, as Zechariah, Haggai, and Malachi.

And because God intended a constant succession of prophets from Samuel's time, therefore in his time was begun a school of the prophets; that is, a school of young men, trained up under some great prophet, who was their master and teacher in the study of divine things, and the practice of holiness, to fit them for this office as God should call them to it. Those young men were called *the sons of the prophets;* and oftentimes they are termed *prophets.* These at first were under the tuition of Samuel. Thus we read of Samuel's being appointed over them, 1 Sam. xix. 20. "And when they saw the company of the prophets prophesying, and Samuel standing as appointed over them." The company of prophets of whom we read, 1 Sam. x. 5. were the same. Afterwards we read of their being under Elijah. Elisha was one of these sons; but he desired to have a double portion of his spirit, as his successor, as the eldest son was wont to have a double portion of the estate of his father: and therefore the sons of the prophets, when they perceived that the spirit of Elijah rested on Elisha, submitted themselves to him, and owned him for their master, as they had done Elijah before him, 2 Kings ii. 15. "And when the sons of the prophets which were to view at Jericho, saw him, they said, The spirit of Elijah doth rest on Elisha. And they bowed themselves to the ground before him." Elisha being their master or teacher, he had the care of them; as you may see, 2 Kings iv. 38. "And Elisha came again into Gilgal, and there was a dearth in the land, and the sons of the prophets were sitting before him; and he said unto his servant, Set on the great pot, and seethe pottage for the sons of the prophets." In Elijah's and Elisha's time, there were several places where there resided companies of these sons of the prophets; as at Bethel, at Jericho, and at Gilgal, unless that at Gilgal and Jericho were the same: and possibly that which is called *the college*, where the prophetess Huldah resided, was another at Jerusalem; see 2 Kings xxii. 14. It is there said of Huldah the prophetess, that *she dwelt in Jerusalem, in the college.* They had houses built, where they used to dwell together; and therefore those at Jericho being multiplied, and finding their houses too little for them, desired leave of their master and teacher Elisha, that they might go and hew timber to build a bigger; as you may see, 2 Kings vi. 1, 2. At some times there were numbers of these sons of the prophets in Israel; for when Jezebel cut off the prophets of the Lord, it is said, that Obadiah took an hundred of them, and hid them by fifty in a cave, 1 Kings xviii. 4.

These schools of the prophets being set up by Samuel, and afterwards kept up by such as Elijah and Elisha, must be of divine appointment; and accordingly we find, that those sons of the prophets were often favoured with a degree of inspira-

tion, while they continued under tuition; and God commonly when he called any prophet to the constant exercise of the prophetical office, and to some extraordinary service, took them out of these schools; though not universally. Hence the prophet Amos, speaking of his being called to the prophetical office, says, that he had not been educated in the schools of the prophets, and was not one of the sons of the prophets, Amos vii. 14, 15. But Amos taking notice of it as remarkable, that he should be so called, shows that it was God's ordinary manner to take his prophets out of these schools; for therein he did but bless his own institution.

Now this remarkable dispensation of Providence—God beginning a constant succession of prophets in Samuel's time, which was to last for many ages; and to that end, establishing a school of the prophets under Samuel, thenceforward to be continued in Israel—was a step that God took in the great affair of redemption. For the main business of this succession of prophets was, to foreshow Christ, and the glorious redemption he was to accomplish and so to prepare the way for his coming; as appears by that forementioned place, Acts iii. 24 and Acts x. 43 "To him give all the prophets witness;" and Acts iii. 18. "But those things which God before had shewed by the mouth of all his prophets, that Christ should suffer, he hath so fulfilled."

The Old Testament church was not wholly without light, but had not the light of the sun directly, only as reflected. Now these prophets were the luminaries that reflected the light of the sun; and accordingly they spoke abundantly of Jesus Christ, as appears by what we have of their prophecies in writing. And they made it very much their business, when they studied in their schools or colleges, and elsewhere, to search out the work of redemption; agreeable to what the apostle Peter says of them, 1 Pet. i. 10, 11. "Of which salvation the prophets have inquired, and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you; searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ that was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow." We are told that the church of the Redeemer is built on the foundation of the prophets and apostles, the Redeemer himself being the chief corner-stone, Eph. ii. 20.

This was the first thing of the nature that ever was done in the world: and it was a great thing that God did towards further advancing this great building of redemption. There had been before occasional prophecies of Christ, as was shown; but now the time drawing nearer when the Redeemer should come, it pleased God to appoint a certain order of men, in constant succession, whose main business it should be, to point

out Christ and his redemption, and as his forerunners to prepare the way for his coming; and God established schools, wherein multitudes were instructed and trained up to that end, Rev. xix. 10. "I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus; for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy."

PART V.

From David to the Babylonish Captivity.

I COME now to the *fifth* period of the times of the Old Testament, beginning with *David*, and extending to the *Babylonish captivity;* and would now proceed to show how the work of redemption was therein carried on.——And here,

I. The first thing to be noticed, is God's anointing that person who was to be the ancestor of Christ, to be king over his people. The dispensations of Providence through the last period, respect the *people* whence Christ was to proceed; but now the scripture leads us to consider God's providence towards that particular *person* whence Christ was to descend, viz. David. It pleased God at this time remarkably to select out this person, from all the thousands of Israel, and to put a most honourable mark of distinction upon him, by anointing him to be king over his people. It was only God that could find him out. His father's house is spoken of as being little in Israel, and he was the youngest of all the sons of his father, and was least expected by Samuel to be the man whom God had chosen. God had before, in the former ages of the world, remarkably distinguished the persons from whom Christ was to come; as Seth, and Noah, and Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob. But the last that we have any account of God's marking out in any notable manner, the very person of whom Christ was to come, was in Jacob's blessing his son Judah; unless we reckon Nashon's advancement in the wilderness to be the head of the tribe of Judah. But this distinction of the person of whom Christ was to come, in David, was very honourable; for it was God's anointing him to be king over his people. And there was something further denoted by David's anointing, than was in the anointing of Saul. God anointed Saul to be king *personally;* but God intended something further by sending Samuel to anoint David, viz. to establish the crown of Israel in him and his *family*, as long as Israel continued to be a kingdom; and not only so, but what

was infinitely more still, establishing the crown of his universal church, his spiritual Israel, in his seed, to the end of the world, and through eternity.

This was a great dispensation of God, and a great step taken towards a further advancing of the work of redemption, according as the time drew near wherein Christ was to come. David, as he was the ancestor of Christ, so he was the greatest personal type of Christ of all under the Old Testament. The types of Christ were of three sorts; instituted, providential, and personal. The ordinance of *sacrificing* was the greatest of the *instituted* types; the redemption out of Egypt was the greatest of the *providential;* and David the greatest of the *personal* ones. Hence Christ is often called David in the prophecies of scripture; as Ezek. xxxiv. 23, 24. "And I will set up one shepherd over them, and he shall feed them, even my servant David;—My servant David a prince among them;" and so in many other places. He is very often spoken of as the seed and the Son of David.

David being the ancestor and great type of Christ, his being solemnly anointed by God to be king over his people, that the kingdom of his church might be continued in his family for ever, may in some respects be looked on as an anointing of Christ himself. Christ was as it were anointed in him; and therefore Christ's anointing and David's anointing are spoken of under one in scripture: Psalm. xxxix. 20. "I have found David my servant; with my holy oil have I anointed him." And David's throne and Christ's are spoken of as one: Luke i. 32. "And the Lord shall give him the throne of his father David." Acts ii. 30. "David—knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne."

Thus God beginning the kingdom of his church in the house of David, was, as it were, a new establishing of the kingdom of Christ; the beginning of it in a state of such visibility, as it thenceforward continued in. It was planting the root whence that branch of righteousness was afterwards to spring up, the everlasting king of his church; and therefore this everlasting king is called *the branch from the stem of Jessee.* Isa. xi. 1. "And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots." Jer. xxiii. 5. "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise up unto David a righteous branch, and a king shall reign and prosper." So chap. xxxiii. 15. "In those days, and at that time, I will cause the branch of righteousness to grow up unto David, and he shall execute judgment and righteousness in the land." So Christ, in the New Testament is called the root and offspring of David. Rev. xxii. 16.

It is observable, that God anointed David after Saul to reign in his room. He took away the crown from him and his family, who was higher in stature than any of his people, and was in their eyes fittest to bear rule; to give it to David, who was low of stature, and in comparison of despicable appearance. So God was pleased to show how Christ, who appeared despicable, without form or comeliness, and was despised and rejected of men, should take the kingdom from the great ones of the earth. And also it is observable, that David was the youngest of Jesse's sons, as Jacob the younger brother supplanted Esau, and got the birthright and blessing from him: and as Pharez, brother of Christ's ancestor, supplanted Zarah in the birth; and as Isaac, another of the ancestors of Christ, cast out his elder brother Ishmael; thus was that frequent saying of Christ fulfilled, "The last shall be first, and the first last."

II. The next thing I would observe, is God's preserving David's life, by a series of wonderful providences, till Saul's death. I before took notice of the wonderful preservation of other particular persons who were the ancestors of Christ; as Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob; and have observed how, in their preservation, the work of redemption itself may be looked upon as preserved from being defeated, and the whole church, which is redeemed through him, from being overthrown. But the preservation of David was no less remarkable than that of any others already noticed. How often was there but a step between him and death. The first instance of it we have in his encountering a lion and a bear, when they had caught a lamb out of his flock, which, without miraculous assistance, could at once have rent this young stripling in pieces, as easily as they could the lamb that he delivered from them. So the root and offspring of David was preserved from the roaring lion that goes about seeking whom he may devour, and conquered him, and rescued the souls of men, that were as lambs in the mouth of this lion. Another remarkable instance was, in preserving him from that mighty giant Goliath, who was strong enough to have torn him to pieces, and given his flesh to the beasts of the field, and to the fowls of the air, as he threatened. But God preserved him, and gave him the victory over Goliath, so that he cut off his head with his own sword, and thus was made the deliverer of Israel. So Christ slew the spiritual Goliath with his own weapon, the cross, and delivered his represented people. And how remarkably did God preserve David from being slain by Saul, when he first sought his life. He gave him his daughter to be a snare to him, that the hand of the Philistines might be upon him, requiring of him a hundred foreskins of the Philistines, that so

his life might be exposed to them. The same divine care was evident in preserving him afterwards, when Saul spake to Jonathan, and to all his servants, to kill David; and in inclining Jonathan, instead of his killing him, as his father commanded, to love him as his own soul, and to be a great instrument of his preservation, even so as to expose his own life to preserve David; though one would have thought that none would have been more willing to have David killed than Jonathan, seeing that he was competitor with him for the crown. Again, Saul threw a javelin at him, to smite him even to the wall; and sent messengers to his house, to watch, and to kill him, when Michal, Saul's daughter, let him down through a window. He afterwards sent messengers, once and again, to Naioth in Ramah, to take him, and they were remarkably prevented by miraculous impressions of the spirit of God; and afterwards, when Saul, being resolute in the affair, went himself, he also was among the prophets. How wonderfully was David's life preserved at Gath among the Philistines, when he went to Achish the king of Gath, and was there in the hands of the Philistines, who, one would have thought, would have dispatched him at once, he having so much provoked them by his exploits against them. He was again wonderfully preserved at Keilah, when he had entered into a fenced town, where Saul thought he was sure of him. And how wonderfully was he preserved from Saul, when he pursued and hunted him in the mountains? How remarkably did God deliver him in the wilderness of Maon, when Saul and his army were compassing David about? How was he delivered in the cave of Engedi, when instead of Saul's killing David, God delivered Saul into his hands in the cave. David cut off his skirt, and might as easily have cut off his head. He was delivered in like manner in the wilderness of Ziph; and afterwards preserved in the land of the Philistines, though David had fought against the Philistines, and conquered them at Keilah, since he was last among them. This, one would think, would have been sufficient warning to them not to trust him, or let him escape a second time, if ever they had him in their hands again; but yet now, when they had a second opportunity, God wonderfully turned their hearts to befriend and protect, instead of destroying him.

Thus was the precious seed that virtually contained the Redeemer, and all the blessings of his redemption, wonderfully preserved, when hell and earth were conspired to destroy it. How often does David himself take notice of this, with praise and admiration, in the book of Psalms?

III. About this time, the written word of God or the canon of scripture, was augmented by Samuel. I have before observed, that the canon of scripture was begun, and the first

written rule of faith and manners was given to the church about the time of Moses. Joshua probably enlarged it, and wrote the last chapter of Deuteronomy, and most of the book of Joshua. Others think that Joshua, Judges, Ruth, and part of the first book of Samuel, were written by Samuel. However that was, of this we have good evidence, that Samuel made an addition to the canon of scripture; for Samuel is manifestly mentioned in the New Testament, as one of the prophets whose writings we have in scripture, Acts iii. 24. "Yea and all the prophets from Samuel, and those that follow after, as many as have spoken, have likewise foretold of these days." By that expression, "as many as have spoken," is meant, as many as have spoken by writing.

And the way that Samuel spoke of these times of Christ and the gospel, was by giving the history of those things that typified, and pointed to them, particularly what he wrote concerning David. The spirit of God moved him to commit those things to writing, chiefly because they pointed to Christ, and the times of the gospel; and, as was said before, this was the main business of all that succession of prophets that began in Samuel. That Samuel added to the canon of the scriptures seems further to appear from 1 Chron. xxix. 29. "Now the acts of David the king, first and last, behold they are written in the book of Samuel the seer."

Whether the book of Joshua was written by Samuel or not, yet it is the general opinion of divines, that the books of Judges and Ruth, and part of the first book of Samuel, were penned by him. The book of Ruth was penned for this reason, that though it seemed to treat of private affairs, yet the persons chiefly spoken of were of the family whence David and Christ proceeded, and so pointed to what the apostle Peter observed of Samuel and the other prophets, in the third chapter of Acts. These additions to the canon of scripture, the great and main instrument of the application of redemption, are to be considered as a further continuation of that work, and an addition made to that great building.

IV. Another thing God did towards this work, at that time, was his inspiring David to show forth Christ and his redemption, in divine songs, which should be for the use of the church, in public worship, throughout all ages. David was himself endued with the spirit of prophecy. He is called *a prophet*, Acts ii. 29, 30. "Let me freely speak to you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day; therefore being a prophet and knowing that God had sworn with an oath," &c. So that herein he was a type of Christ, that he was both a *prophet* and a *king*.

The oil that was used in anointing David was a type of

the spirit of God; and the type and the antetype were given both together; as we are told, 1 Sam. xvi. 13. "Then Samuel took the horn of oil, and anointed him in the midst of his brethren; and the spirit of the Lord came upon David from that day forward;" and it is probable, that it now came upon him in its prophetical influences. One way that this spirit influenced him was by inspiring him to show forth Christ, and the glorious things of his redemption, in divine songs, sweetly expressing the breathings of a pious soul, full of admiration of the glorious things of the Redeemer, inflamed with divine love and elevated praise; and therefore he is called the sweet psalmist of Israel, 2 Sam. xxiii. 1. The main subjects of these songs were the glorious things of the gospel; as is evident by the interpretation that is often put upon them, and the use that is made of them in the New Testament: for there is no one book of the Old Testament that is so often quoted in the New, as the book of Psalms. Joyfully did this holy man sing of those great things of Christ's redemption, that had been the hope and expectation of God's church and people from the beginning: and joyfully did others follow him in it, as Asaph, Heman, Ethan, and others; for the book of Psalms was not all penned by David, though the greater part of it was. Hereby the canon of the scripture was further enlarged by an excellent portion of divine writ.

This was a great advancement that God made in this building; and the light of the gospel, which had been gradually growing, was exceedingly increased by it: for whereas before there was but here and there a prophecy given of Christ in a great many ages, here Christ is spoken of by his ancestor David abundantly, in multitudes of songs, speaking of his incarnation, life, death, resurrection, ascension into heaven, his satisfaction, intercession; his prophetical, kingly, and priestly office; his glorious benefits in this life and that which is to come; his union with the church, and the blessedness of the church in him; the calling of the Gentiles, the future glory of the church near the end of the world, and Christ's coming to the final judgment. All these things, and many more, concerning Christ and his redemption, are abundantly spoken of in the book of Psalms.

This was also a glorious advancement of the affair of redemption, as God hereby gave his church a book of divine songs for their use in that part of their public worship, viz. singing his praises throughout all ages to the end of the world. It is manifest the book of Psalms was given of God for this end. It was used in the church of Israel by God's appointment: this is manifest by the title of many of the Psalms, in which they are inscribed to the chief musician, *i. e.* to the man that was appointed to be the leader of divine songs in the

temple, in the public worship of Israel. So David is called *the sweet psalmist of Israel*, because he penned psalms for the use of the church of Israel; and accordingly we have an account that they were actually made use of in the church of Israel for that end, even ages after David was dead; as 2 Chron. xxix. 30. "Moreover, Hezekiah the king, and the princes, commanded the Levites to sing praises unto the Lord, with the words of David, and of Asaph the seer." And we find that the same are appointed in the New Testament to be made use of in the Christian church, in their worship: Eph. v. 19. "Speaking to yourselves in psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs." Col. iii. 16. "Admonishing one another in psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs." So they have been, and will, to the end of the world, be made use of in the church to celebrate the praises of God. The people of God were wont sometimes to worship God by singing songs to his praise before; as they did at the Red Sea; and they had Moses' prophetical song, in the 32d chapter of Deuteronomy, committed to them for that end; and Deborah, Barak, and Hannah, sung praises to God: but now first did God commit to his church a book of divine songs for their constant use.

V. The next thing I would notice, is God's actually exalting David to the throne of Israel, notwithstanding all the opposition made to it. God was determined to do it, and he made every thing give place that stood in its way. He removed Saul and his sons out of the way; and first set David over the tribe of Judah; then having removed Ishbosheth, set him over all Israel. Thus did God fulfil his word to David. He took him from the sheep-cote, and made him king over his people Israel, Psalm lxxviii. 60, 71. And now the throne of Israel was established in that family in which it was to continue for ever.

VI. Now first it was that God proceeded to choose a particular city out of all the tribes of Israel to place his name there. There is several times mention made in the law of Moses, of the children of Israel bringing their oblations to the place which God should choose: as Deut. xii. 5—7. and other places; but God had never proceeded to do it till now. The tabernacle and ark were never fixed, but sometimes in one place and sometimes in another; but now God proceeded to choose Jerusalem. The city of Jerusalem was never thoroughly conquered, or taken out of the hands of the Jebusites, till David's time. It is said in Joshua xv. 63. "As for the Jebusites, the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the children of Judah could not drive them out: but the Jebusites dwell with the children of Judah at Jerusalem unto this day." But now David wholly subdued it, as we have an account in 2 Sam. v. And now God proceeded to choose that city *to place his name there*, as appears

by David's bringing up the ark thither soon after; and therefore this is mentioned afterwards as the first time God proceeded to choose a city to that end, 2 Chron. vi. 5, 6. and chap. xii. 13. Afterwards God proceeded to show David the very place where he would have his temple built, viz. in the threshing-floor of Araunah the Jebusite.

This city of Jerusalem is therefore called the *holy city;* and it was the greatest type of the church of Christ in all the Old Testament. It was redeemed by David, the Captain of the hosts of Israel, out of the hands of the Jebusites, to be God's city, the holy place of his rest for ever, where he would dwell. So Christ, the Captain of his people's salvation, redeems his church out of the hands of devils, to be his holy and beloved city. And therefore how often does the scripture, when speaking of Christ's redemption of his church, call it by the names of Zion and Jerusalem? This was the city that God had appointed to be the place of the first gathering and erecting of the Christian church after Christ's resurrection, of that remarkable effusion of the spirit of God on the apostles and primitive Christians, and the place whence the gospel was to sound forth into all the world; the place of the first Christian church, that was to be, as it were, the mother of all other churches through the world; agreeable to that prophecy, Is. ii. 3, 4. "Out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem; and he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people," &c. Thus God chose Mount Zion whence the gospel was to be sounded forth, as the law had been from Mount Sinai.

VII. The next thing to be observed here, is God's solemnly renewing the covenant of grace with David, and promising that the Messiah should be of his seed. We have an account of it in the 7th chapter of the second book of Samuel. It was done on occasion of the thoughts David entertained of building God a house. On this occasion God sends Nathan the prophet to him, with the glorious promises of the covenant of grace. It is especially contained in these words, (ver. 16.) "And thy house and thy kingdom shall be established for ever before thee; thy throne shall be established for ever." Which promise has respect to Christ, the seed of David, and is fulfilled in him only: for the kingdom of David has long since ceased, any otherwise than as it is upheld in Christ.

That this covenant, now established with David by Nathan the prophet, was the covenant of grace, is evident by the plain testimony of scripture, Is. lv. 1—3. There we have Christ inviting sinners to come to the waters, &c. And in the 3d verse, he says, "Incline your ear, and come unto me; hear and your souls shall live; and I will make with you an everlasting covenant, even the sure mercies of David." Here Christ

offers to poor sinners, if they will come to him, to give them an interest in the same everlasting covenant that he had made with David, conveying to them the same sure mercies. But what is that covenant, in which sinners obtain an interest when they come to Christ, but the covenant of grace?

This was the fifth solemn establishment of the covenant of grace with the church after the fall. The covenant of grace was revealed and established all along. But there had been particular seasons, wherein God had in a very solemn manner renewed this covenant with his church, giving forth a new edition and establishment of it, revealing it in a new manner. The first was with Adam; the second with Noah; the third with the patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; the fourth was in the wilderness by Moses; and now the fifth is made to David.

This establishment of the covenant of grace, David always esteemed the greatest smile of God upon him, the greatest honour put upon him; he prized it, and rejoiced in it above all other blessings of his reign. You may see how joyfully and thankfully he received it, when Nathan came to him with the glorious message, 2 Sam. vii. 18, &c. And so David, in his last words, declares this to be all his salvation, and all his desire; 2 Sam. xxiii. 5. "He hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure: for this is all my salvation and all my desire."

VIII. It was by David that God first gave his people Israel the possession of the whole promised land. I have before shown, how God giving possession of the promised land belonged to the covenant of grace. This was done in a great measure by Joshua, but not fully. Joshua did not wholly subdue that part of the promised land that was strictly called the land of Canaan, and that was divided by lot to the several tribes; but there were great numbers of the old inhabitants left unsubdued, as we read in the books of Joshua and Judges: and there were many left to prove Israel, and to be as thorns in their sides. There were the Jebusites in Jerusalem, and many of the Canaanites, and the whole nation of the Philistines, who all dwelt in that part of the land that was divided by lot, and chiefly in that which belonged to the tribes of Judah and Ephraim.

And thus these remains of the old inhabitants of Canaan continued unsubdued till David's time; but he wholly subdued them all. Which is agreeable to what St. Stephen observes, Acts vii. 45. "Which also our fathers brought in with Jesus (i. e. Joshua) into the possession of the Gentiles, whom God drove out before the face of our fathers, unto the days of David." They were till the days of David in driving them out, before they had wholly subdued them. But David

entirely brought them under. He subdued the Jubusite, the whole nation of the Philistines, and all the rest of the remains of the seven nations of Canaan ; 1 Chron. xviii. 1. "Now after this it came to pass, that David smote the Philistines, and subdued them, and took Gath and her towns out of the hands of the Philistines."

After this, all the remains of the former inhabitants of Canaan were made bond-servants to the Israelites. The posterity of the Gibeonites became servants before, hewers of wood, and drawers of water, for the house of God. But Solomon, David's son and successor, put all the other remains of the seven nations of Canaan to bond-service; at least made them pay a tribute of bond-service, 1 Kings ix. 20—22. And hence we read of the children of Solomon's servants, after the return from the Babylonish captivity, Ezra ii. 55; and Neh. xi. 3. They were the children or posterity of the seven nations of Canaan, that Solomon had subjected to bond-service.

Thus David subdued the whole land of Canaan, strictly so called. But then that was not one half, nor quarter, of the land God had promised to their fathers. The land often promised to their fathers, included all the countries from the river of Egypt to the river Euphrates. These were the bounds of the land promised to Abraham, Gen. xv. 18. "In that same day the Lord made a covenant with Abraham, saying, Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt, unto the great river, the river Euphrates." So again God promised at Mount Sinai, Exod. xxiii. 31. "And I will set thy bounds from the Red Sea even unto the sea of the Philistines, and from the desert unto the river: for I will deliver the inhabitants of the land into your hand; and thou shalt drive them out before thee." So again, Deut. xi. 24. "Every place whereon the soles of your feet shall tread, shall be yours: from the wilderness, and Lebanon, from the river, the river Euphrates, even unto the uttermost sea, shall your coast be." Again, the same promise is made to Joshua: Josh. i. 3, 4. "Every place that the sole of your feet shall tread upon have I given unto you, as I said unto Moses; from the wilderness and this Lebanon, even unto the great river, the river Euphrates, all the land of the Hittites, and unto the great sea, towards the going down of the sun, shall be your coast." But the land of which Joshua gave the people possession, was but a little part of this land. And the people never had possession of it, till now, when God gave it them by David.

This large country did not only include that Canaan which was divided by lot to those who came in with Joshua, but the land of the Moabites and Ammonites, the land of the Amalekites, and the rest of the Edomites, and the country of

Zobah. All these nations were subdued and brought under the children of Israel by David. And he put garrisons in the several countries, and they became David's servants, as we have a particular account in the 8th chapter of 2d Samuel: and David extended their border to the river Euphrates, as was promised; see the 3d verse: "And David smote also Hadadezer the son of Rehob, king of Zobah, as he went to recover his border at the river Euphrates." And accordingly we read, that Solomon his son reigned over all the region on this side the river, 1 Kings iv. 24. "For he had dominion over all the region on this side the river, from Tiphsha even unto Azzah, over all the kings on this side the river." This Artaxerxes king of Persia takes notice of long after: Ezra iv. 20. "There have been mighty kings also over Jerusalem, which have ruled over all countries beyond the river; and toll, tribute, and custom was paid unto them."

So that Joshua, that eminent type of Christ, did but begin the work of giving Israel the possession of the promised land; but left it to be finished by that much greater type and ancestor of Christ, even David, who subdued far more of that land than ever Joshua had done. And in this extent of his and Solomon's dominion was some resemblance of the great extent of Christ's kingdom; which is set forth by this very thing, Psal. lxxii. 8. "He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth." See also 1 Kings viii. 56.

IX. God by David perfected the Jewish worship, and added to it several new institutions. The law was given by Moses, but yet all the institutions of the Jewish worship were not given by Moses; some were added by divine direction. So this greatest of all personal types of Christ did not only perfect Joshua's work, in giving Israel the possession of the promised land, but he also finished Moses' work, in perfecting the instituted worship of Israel. Thus there must be a number of typical prophets, priests, and princes, to complete one figure or shadow of Christ the antetype, he being the substance of all the types and shadows. Of so much more glory was Christ accounted worthy, than Moses, Joshua, David, and Solomon, and all the great prophets, priests, and princes, judges, and saviours of the Old Testament put together.

The ordinances of David are mentioned as of parallel validity with those of Moses, 2 Chron. xxiii. 18. "Also Jehoiada appointed the offices of the house of the Lord by the hand of the priests the Levites, whom David had distributed in the house of the Lord, to offer the burnt-offerings of the Lord, as it is written in the law of Moses, with rejoicing and with singing, as it was ordained by David." The worship of Israel was

perfected by David, by the addition he made to the ceremonial law, (1 Chron. xxiii. &c.) consisting in the several orders and courses into which the Levites were divided, and the work and business to which he appointed them, different from what Moses had appointed them to; and also in the divisions of the priests the sons of Aaron, into four and twenty courses, assigning to every course their business in the house of the Lord, and their particular stated times of attendance there. He also appointed some of the Levites to a new office, that of singers, particularly ordering and regulating them in that office, (1 Chron. xxv.) Others of the Levites he appointed by law to the several services of porters, treasurers, officers, and judges: and these ordinances of David were kept up thenceforth in the church of Israel, as long as the Jewish church lasted. Thus we find the several orders of priests, and the Levites, the porters, and singers, after the captivity. And we find the courses of the priests appointed by David still continuing in the New Testament: Zacharias the father of John the Baptist was a priest of the course of Abia; which is the same with the course of Abijah appointed by David, 1 Chron. xxiv. 10.

Thus David as well as Moses was made like to Christ the son of David, in this respect, that by him God gave in a manner, a new ecclesiastical establishment, and new institutions of worship. David did not only add to the institutions of Moses, but by those additions he abolished some of the old institutions that had been in force till that time; particularly those laws which appointed the business of the Levites, which we have in the 3d and 4th chapters of Numbers, which very much consisted in their charge of the several parts and utensils of the tabernacle. But those laws were now abolished; and they were no more to carry those things, as they had been used to do. But David appointed them to other work instead of it; 1 Chron. xxiii. 26. "And also unto the Levites, they shall no more carry the tabernacle, nor any vessels of it for the service thereof:" A sure evidence that the ceremonial law given by Moses is not perpetual, as the Jews suppose; but might be wholly abolished by Christ; for if David, a type of the Messiah, might abolish the law of Moses in part, much more might the Messiah himself abolish the whole.

David, by God's appointment, abolished all use of the tabernacle built by Moses, and of which he had the pattern from God: for God now revealed it to David to be his will, that a temple should be built instead of the tabernacle. This was a great presage of what Christ, the son of David, would do when he should come, viz. abolish the whole Jewish ecclesiastical constitution, which was but as a moveable tabernacle,

to set up the spiritual gospel-temple, which was to be far more glorious, of greater extent, and was to last for ever. David had the pattern of all things pertaining to the temple showed him, even in like manner as Moses had the pattern of the tabernacle: and Solomon built the temple according to that pattern which he had from his father David, which *he* received from God. 1 Chron. xxviii 11, 12, "Then David gave to Solomon his son the pattern of the porch and of the houses thereof, and of the treasuries thereof, and of the upper chambers thereof, and of the inner parlours thereof, and of the place of the mercy-seat, and the pattern of all that he had by the spirit, of the courts of the house of the Lord, and of all the chambers round about, of the treasuries of the house of God, and of the treasuries of the dedicated things." And ver. 19. "All this, said David, the Lord made me understand in writing by his hand upon me, even all the works of this pattern."

X. The canon of scripture seems at or after the close of David's reign to be added to by the prophets Nathan and Gad. It appears probable by the scriptures, that they carried on the history of the two books of Samuel from the place where Samuel left it, and finished them. These seem to be called "the book of Samuel the seer, and Nathan the prophet, and Gad the seer," 1 Chron. xxix. 29. "Now the acts of David the king, first and last, behold, they are written in the book of Samuel the seer, and in the book of Nathan the prophet, and in the book of Gad the seer."

XI. The next thing I would notice, is God's wonderfully continuing the kingdom of his visible people in the line of Christ's legal ancestors, as long as they remained an independent kingdom. Thus it was without any interruption worth notice. Indeed the kingdom of all the tribes of Israel was not kept in that line; but the dominion of that part in which the true worship of God was upheld, who were God's visible people, was always kept in the family of David, as long as there was any such thing as an independent king of Israel; according to his promise to David; and not only in the *family* of David, but always in that *part* of David's posterity whence Christ was legally descended. So that Christ's legal ancestor was always on the throne, excepting Jehoahaz, who reigned three months, and Zedekiah; as you may see in Matthew's genealogy of Christ.

Christ was *legally* descended from the kings of Judah, though not *naturally*. He was both legally and naturally descended from David. He was naturally descended from Nathan the son of David; for Mary his mother was one of the posterity of David by Nathan, as you may see in Luke's genealogy; but Joseph, the reputed and legal father of Christ, was naturally descended of Solomon and his successors,

as we have an account in Matthew's genealogy. Jesus Christ, though he was not the natural son of Joseph, yet by the law and constitution of the Jews, was Joseph's heir; because he was the lawful son of Joseph's lawful wife, conceived while she was his legally espoused wife. The Holy Ghost raised up seed to him. A person, by the law of Moses might be the legal son and heir of another, whose natural son he was not; as sometimes a man raised up seed to his brother: a brother, in some cases, was to build up a brother's house; so the Holy Ghost built up Joseph's house. Joseph being in the direct line to the kings of Judah, of the house of David, he was in this respect the legal heir of the crown of David; and Christ being legally his first-born son, he was his heir; and so Christ, by the law, was the proper heir of the crown of David, and is therefore said to sit upon the throne of his father David.

The crown of God's people was wonderfully kept in the line of Christ's legal ancestors. When David was old and not able any longer to manage the affairs of the kingdom, Adonijah, one of his sons, set up to be king, and seemed to have obtained his purpose. All things for a while seemed fair on his side, and he thought himself strong. But Adonijah was not the ancestor of Joseph, the legal father of Christ; and therefore how wonderfully did Providence work here! what a strange and sudden revolution! All Adonijah's kingdom and glory vanished away as soon as it was begun; and Solomon, the legal ancestor of Christ, was established in the throne.

And after Solomon's death, when Jeroboam had conspired against the family, and Rehoboam carried himself in such a manner that it was a wonder *all Israel* was not provoked to forsake him, (as ten tribes actually did,) and set up Jeroboam in opposition to him; and though he was a wicked man, and deserved to have been rejected altogether from being king; yet he being the legal ancestor of Christ, God kept the kingdom of the two tribes, in which the true religion was upheld, in his possession. And though his son Abijam was another wicked prince; yet God still continued the crown in the family, and gave it to Abijam's son, Asa. And afterwards, though many of the kings of Judah were very wicked men, and horribly provoked God, as particularly Jehoram, Ahaziah, Ahaz, Manasseh, and Amon; yet God did not take away the crown from their family, but gave it to their sons, because they were the ancestors of Christ. God's remembering his covenant established with David, is given as the reason why God did thus, notwithstanding their wicked lives; 1 Kings xv. 4. speaking of Abijam's wickedness, it is said, "Nevertheless, for David's sake did the Lord his God give him a lamp in Jeru-

salem, to set up his son after him, and to establish Jerusalem :" so 2 Chron. xxi. 7. speaking of Jehoram's great wickedness, it is said, " Howbeit the Lord would not destroy the house of David, because of the covenant that he had made with David, and as he promised to give light unto him, and to his sons for ever."

The crown of the ten tribes was changed from one family to another continually. First, Jeroboam took it; but the crown descended only to his son Nadab. Then Baasha, who was of another family, took it; and it remained in his posterity but one generation after his death. And then Zimri, who was his servant, and not of his posterity, took it; from whom Omri, who was of another family, took it. The crown continued in his family for three successions: and then Jehu, who was of another family, took it. The crown continued in his family for three or four successions; and then Shallum, that was of another family, took it. The crown did not descend at all to his posterity; but Menahem, who was of another family, took it; and it remained in his family but one generation after him. Then Pekah, who was of another family, took it; and after him Hoshea, that was still of another family, took it. So great a difference was there between the crown of Israel, and crown of Judah; the one was continued evermore in the same family, and with very little interruption, in one right line; the other was continually tossed about from one family to another, as if it were the sport of fortune. The reason was not, because the kings of Judah, at least many of them, were better than the kings of Israel; but the one had the blessing in them; they were the ancestors of Christ, whose right it was to sit on the throne of Israel. But with the kings of Israel it was not so; and therefore divine providence exercised a continual care through all the changes that happened through so many generations, and such a long space of time, to keep the crown of Judah in one direct line, in fulfilment of the everlasting covenant he had made with David, the mercies of which covenant were sure mercies; but in the other case there was no such covenant, and so no such interposing care of Providence.

And here it must not be omitted, that there was once a very strong conspiracy of the kings of Syria and Israel, in the time of that wicked king of Judah, Ahaz, to dispossess him and his family of the throne of Judah, and to set one of another family, even the son of Tabeal, on it; as Is. vii. 6. " Let us go up against Judah, and vex it, and let us make a breach therein for us, and set a king in the midst of it, even the son of Tabeal." And they seemed very likely to accomplish their purpose. There seemed to be so great a likelihood of it, that the hearts of the people sunk within them; they gave up the cause. It

is said, "The heart of Ahaz and his people was moved as the trees of the wood are moved with the wind." And on this occasion God sent the prophet Isaiah to encourage the people, and tell them that it should not come to pass. And because it looked so much like a lost cause to Ahaz and the people, therefore God directs the prophet to give them this sign of it, viz. that Christ should be born of the *legal seed of Ahaz:* as Is. vii. 14. "Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign: Behold a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel." This was a good sign, and a great confirmation of the truth of what God promised by Isaiah, viz. that the kings of Syria and Israel should never accomplish their purpose of dispossessing the family of Ahaz of the crown of Judah, and setting up the son of Tabeal; for Christ the Immanuel was to be of them.

XII. The building of the temple was a great type of three things, viz. of Christ, especially his human nature; of the church; and of heaven. The tabernacle seemed rather to represent the church in its moveable, changeable state, in this world. But that beautiful, glorious, costly structure, the temple that succeeded the tabernacle, seems especially to represent the church in its glorified state in heaven. This temple was built according to the direction and the pattern shown by the Holy Ghost to David, in the place where was the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite, in Mount Moriah, 2 Chron. iii. 1; the same mountain, (and probably in the very same place,) where Abraham offered up his son Isaac; for that is said to be in the land of Moriah, Gen. xxii. 2. and was called *the mountain of the Lord*, as this of the temple was, Gen. xxii. 14. "And Abraham called the name of that place Jehovah-jireh; as it is said to this day, In the mount of the Lord it shall be seen."

This was the house where Christ dwelt, till he came to dwell in human nature. That his body was the antetype of this temple, appears from what he says, "Destroy this temple, and in three days, I will raise it up," speaking of the temple of his body, John ii. 19, 20. This continued to be the house of God, the place of worship for his church, till Christ came; the place that God chose, where all their sacrifices were offered up, till the great sacrifice came. Into this temple the Lord came, even the messenger of the covenant. Here he often delivered his heavenly doctrine and wrought miracles; here his church was gathered by the pouring out of the Spirit, after his ascension. Luke xxiv. 53. "And they were continually in the temple, praising and blessing God." And (Acts ii. 46.) respecting the multitudes that were converted by that great effusion of the Spirit on the day of pentecost, it is said, "And they continued daily with one accord in the temple." And the

sacred historian (Acts v. 42.) speaking of the apostles, says, "And daily in the temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ." And thence the sound of the gospel went forth, and the church was spread into all the world.

XIII. It is here worthy to be observed, that in Solomon's reign, after the temple was finished, the Jewish church was risen to its highest external glory. The Jewish church, as to its ordinances and constitution, is compared to the moon, Rev. xii. 1. "And there appeared a great wonder in heaven, a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars." This church was like the moon in many other respects, but especially that it waxed and waned like the moon. From its first formation, which was in the covenant made with Abraham, when this moon began to appear, it had been gradually increasing in its glory. This time, wherein the temple was finished and dedicated, was about the middle between the calling of Abraham and the coming of Christ, and now it was full moon. After this the glory of the Jewish church gradually decreased, till Christ came; as I shall have occasion to show more particularly.

Now the church of Israel was in its highest external glory. Now Israel was multiplied exceedingly, so that they seemed to have become like the sand on the sea shore, 1 Kings iv. 20. Now the kingdom of Israel was firmly established in the right family, the family of which Christ was to come. Now God had chosen the city where he would place his name; and had fully given his people the possession of the promised land.—They now possessed the dominion of it all, in quietness and peace, even from the river of Egypt, to the great river Euphrates; all those nations which had formerly been their enemies, quietly submitted to them; none pretended to rebel against them. Now the Jewish worship in all its ordinances was fully settled: instead of a moveable tabernacle, they had a glorious temple; the most magnificent, beautiful, and costly structure, that ever had been, or has been since. Now, the people enjoyed peace and plenty, and sat every man under his vine and fig-tree, eating and drinking and making merry, 1 Kings iv. 20. They were in the highest pitch of earthly prosperity, silver being as plenty as stones, and the land full of gold and precious stones, and other precious foreign commodities, which were brought by Solomon's ships from Ophir and other parts of the world. Now they had a king reigning over them who was the wisest of men and probably the greatest earthly prince that ever was: their fame went abroad into all the earth, so that they came from the utmost parts of the earth to see their glory and their happiness.

Thus God was pleased, in one of Messiah's ancestors,

remarkably to shadow forth the kingdom of Christ and himself reigning in his glory. David, a man of war, a man who had shed much blood, and whose life was full of troubles and conflicts, was a more suitable representation of Christ in his state of humiliation, wherein he was conflicting with his enemies. But Solomon, a man of peace, was a representation more especially of Christ exalted, triumphing and reigning in his kingdom of peace. And the happy glorious state of the Jewish church at that time, remarkably represented two things:—1. A glorious state of the church on earth, in the latter ages of the world; those days of peace, when nation shall not lift sword against nation, nor learn war any more. 2. The future glorified state of the church in heaven. The earthly Canaan never was so lively a type of the heavenly Canaan as it was then, when the happy people of Israel indeed enjoyed it as a land flowing with milk and honey.

XIV. After this the glory of the Jewish church gradually declined more and more till Christ came; yet the work of redemption went on. Whatever failed or declined, God still carried on this work from age to age; this building was advancing higher and higher. It went on, even during the decline of the Jewish church, towards a further preparation of things for the coming of Christ, as well as during its increase; for so wonderfully were things ordered by the infinitely wise governor of the world, that whatever happened was ordered for good to this general design, and made a means of promoting it. When the Jews flourished, and were in prosperity, he made *that* to contribute to the promoting of this design; and when they were in adversity, God made this also contribute to the same. While the Jewish church was in its increasing state, the work of redemption was carried on by their increase; and when they came to their declining state, from Solomon's time till Christ, God carried on the work of redemption by *that*. The very decline itself, was one thing that God employed as a further preparation for Christ's coming.

As the moon, from the time of its full, is approaching nearer and nearer to her conjunction with the sun; so her light is still more and more decreasing, till at length when the conjunction comes, it is wholly swallowed up in the light of the sun. So it was with the Jewish church from the time of its highest glory in Solomon's time. In the latter end of Solomon's reign, the state of things began to darken, by his corrupting himself with idolatry, which much obscured the glory of this mighty and wise prince; and troubles also began to arise in his kingdom. After his death the kingdom was divided, and ten tribes revolted, and withdrew their subjection from the house of David, apostatizing also from the true worship of God in the temple at Jerusalem, and setting up

the golden calves of Bethel and Dan. And presently after this the number of the ten tribes was greatly diminished in the battle of Jeroboam with Abijah, wherein there fell down slain of Israel five hundred thousand chosen men; which loss the kingdom of Israel probably never in any measure recovered.

The ten tribes finally apostatized from the true God under Jeroboam. The kingdom of Judah was greatly corrupted, and from that time forward more generally in a corrupt state than otherwise. In Ahab's time the kingdom of Israel did not only worship the calves of Bethel and Dan, but the worship of Baal was introduced. Before they pretended to worship the true God by these images, the calves of Jeroboam; but now Ahab introduced gross idolatry, and the direct worship of false gods in the room of the true God; and soon after, the worship of Baal was introduced into the kingdom of Judah, viz. in Jehoram's reign, by his marrying Athaliah, the daughter of Ahab. After this God began to cut Israel short, by finally destroying and sending into captivity, that part which was beyond Jordan, 2 Kings x. 32, &c. Then Tiglath-Pileser subdued and enslaved all the northern parts, 2 Kings xv. 29; and at last all the ten tribes were subdued by Shalmaneser, and they were finally carried away captive out of their own land. After this also the kingdom of Judah was carried captive into Babylon and a great part of the nation never returned. Those who returned were but a small number, compared with what had been carried captive; and for the most part after this they were dependent on the power of other states. They were subject one while to the kings of Persia, then to the monarchy of the Grecians, and then to the Romans. And before Christ's time, the Jewish church was become exceeding corrupt, overrun with superstition and self-righteousness. And how small a flock was the church of Christ in the days of his incarnation!

God, by this gradual decline of the Jewish state and church from Solomon's time, prepared the way for the coming of Christ several ways.

1. The decline of the glory of this legal dispensation, made way for the introduction of the more glorious dispensation of the gospel. The evangelical dispensation was so much more glorious, that the legal dispensation had no glory in comparison with it. The ancient dispensation, even as it was in Solomon's time, was but an inferior glory, compared with the spiritual glory of the dispensation introduced by Christ. The church, under the Old Testament, was a child under tutors and governors, and God dealt with it accordingly. Those pompous externals are called by the apostle, *weak and beggarly elements*. It was fit that those things should be

diminished as Christ approached; as John the Baptist, the forerunner of Christ, speaking of Christ, says, *He must increase, but I must decrease*, John iii. 30. It is fit that the twinkling stars should gradually withdraw their glory, when the sun is approaching towards his rising point. The glory of the Jewish dispensation must be gradually diminished, to prepare the way for the more joyful reception of the spiritual glory of the gospel. If the Jewish church, when Christ came, had been in the same external glory that it was in, in the reign of Solomon, men would have had their eyes so dazzled with it, that they would not have been likely, joyfully to exchange such great external grandeur, for only the spiritual glory of the despised Jesus. Again,

2. This gradual decline of the glory in the Jewish state, tended to make the glory of God's power, in the great effects of Christ's redemption, the more conspicuous. God's people being so diminished and weakened by one step after another, till Christ came, was very much like the diminishing of Gideon's army. God told Gideon, that the people with him were *too many* for the conquest of the Midianites, lest Israel should vaunt itself, saying, "My own hand hath saved me." And therefore all that were fearful were commanded to return; and there returned twenty and two thousand, and there remained ten thousand. But still they were too many; and then, by trying the people at the water, they were reduced to three hundred men. So the people in Solomon's time were too many, and mighty, and glorious for Christ; therefore he diminished them; first, by sending off the ten tribes; then he diminished them by the captivity into Babylon; and then they were further didiminished by their great and general corruption when Christ came; so that Christ found very few godly persons among them. With a small handful of disciples, Christ conquered the world. Thus high things were brought down, that Christ might be exalted.

3. This prepared the way for Christ's coming, as it made the salvation of those Jews who were saved by Christ, to be more sensible and visible. Though the greater part of the Jewish nation was rejected, and the Gentiles called in their room; yet a great many thousands of the Jews were saved by Christ after his resurrection, Acts xxi. 20. They being taken from so low a state under temporal calamity in their bondage to the Romans, and from a state of so great superstition and wickedness, it made their redemption the more sensibly and visibly glorious.

XV. I would here take notice of the additions which were made to the canon of scripture in or soon after the reign of Solomon. There were considerable additions made by Solomon himself, who wrote the books of Proverbs and Eccle-

siastes, probably near the close of his reign. His Song of Songs, as it is called, is wholly on the subject we are upon, viz. Christ and his redemption, representing the high and glorious relation, union, and love, that is between Christ and his redeemed church. And the sacred history seems, in Solomon's reign, and some of the next succeeding, to have been enlarged by the prophets Nathan and Ahijah, Shemaiah and Iddo. It is probable that part of the history which we have in the first of Kings, was written by them. (See 2 Chron. ix. 29. xii. 15. xiii. 22.)

XVI. God wonderfully upheld his church and the true religion through this period. It was very wonderful, considering the many and great apostacies of that people to idolatry. When the ten tribes had generally and finally forsaken the true worship, God kept up the true religion in the kingdom of Judah; and when *they* corrupted themselves, as they very often did exceedingly, and idolatry was ready totally to swallow up all, yet God kept the lamp alive. When things seemed to be come to an extremity, and religion at its last gasp, he was often pleased to grant blessed revivals by remarkable outpourings of his Spirit, particularly in Hezekiah's and Josiah's time.

XVII. God remarkably kept the book of the law from being lost in times of general and long-continued neglect of it. The most remarkable instance of this kind was its preservation in the time of the great apostacy, during the greatest part of the long reign of Manasseh, which lasted fifty-five years, and the reign of Amon his son. This while the law was so much neglected, and such a careless and profane management of the affairs of the temple prevailed, that the book which used to be laid up by the side of the ark in the Holy of Holies, was lost for a long time; and nobody knew where it was. But yet God preserved it from being finally lost. In Josiah's time, when they came to repair the temple, it was found buried in rubbish. It had been lost so long that Josiah himself seems to have been much a stranger to it. (See 2 Kings xxii. 8, &c.)

XVIII. God remarkably preserved the tribe of which Christ was to proceed, from being ruined through the many and great dangers of this period. The visible church of Christ from Solomon's reign was mainly in the tribe of Judah. The tribe of Benjamin, which was annexed to them, was but a very small tribe, and that of Judah exceeding large; and as Judah took Benjamin under his protection when he went into Egypt to bring corn, so the tribe of Benjamin seemed to be under the covert of Judah ever after. And though, on occasion of Jeroboam's setting up the calves at Bethel and Dan, the Levites resorted to Judah out of all the tribes of Israel, (2 Chron. xi. 13;) yet they were also small, and not reckoned

among the tribes. Many of the ten tribes, it is true, on that occasion, for the sake of worshipping God in the temple, left their inheritances in their several tribes, and settled in Judah, and so were incorporated with them, as we have an account in the chapter just quoted, (ver. 16;) yet the tribe of Judah was so much the prevailing part, that they were called by one name, *Judah.* Therefore God said to Solomon, (1 Kings xi. 13,) "I will not rend away all the kingdom: but will give one tribe to thy son, for David my servant's sake, and for Jerusalem's sake, which I have chosen." So when the ten tribes were carried captive, it is said, there was none left but the tribe of Judah: 2 Kings xvii. 18. "Therefore the Lord was very wroth with Israel and removed them out of his sight: there was none left but the tribe of Judah only." Whence they were all called *Jews*, a word derived from *Judah.*

This was the tribe of which Christ was to come; and in this chiefly did God's visible church consist, from Solomon's time. This people, over whom the kings who were legal ancestors of Christ, and of the house of David, reigned, was wonderfully preserved from destruction during this period, when they often seemed to be upon the brink of ruin, and just ready to be swallowed up. So it was in Rehoboam's time, when Shishak king of Egypt came against Judah with a vast force. Of this we read in the beginning of the 12th chapter of 2 Chronicles. So it was again in Abijah's time, when Jeroboam set the battle in array against him with eight hundred thousand chosen men; a mighty army! 2 Chron. xiii. 3. Then God wrought deliverance to Judah, out of regard to the covenant of grace established with David, as is evident by verse 4 and 5; and the victory they obtained was because the Lord was on their side, as you may see, verse 12. So it was again in Asa's time, when Zerah the Ethiopian came against him with a yet larger army of a thousand thousand and three hundred chariots, 2 Chron. xiv. 9. On this occasion Asa cried to the Lord, and trusted in him, being sensible that it was nothing with him to help those that had no power; (ver. 11.) "And Asa cried unto the Lord his God, and said, Lord, it is nothing with thee to help, whether with many, or with those that have no power." And accordingly God gave them a glorious victory over this mighty host.

So again it was in Jehoshaphat's time, when the children of Moab, and the children of Ammon, and the inhabitants of Mount Seir, combined together against Judah with a mighty army, a force vastly superior to any that Jehoshaphat could raise; and Jehoshaphat and his people were greatly afraid: yet they set themselves to seek God on this occasion, and trusted in him; and God told them by one of his prophets, that they need not fear them, nor should they have any occa-

sion to fight in this battle, they should only *stand still and see the salvation of the Lord.* And according to his direction, they only stood still and sang praises to God; and God made their enemies do the work themselves by killing one another; and the children of Judah had nothing to do, but to gather the spoil, which was more than they could carry away. (2 Chron. xx.)

So it was again in Ahaz's time, when Rezin the king of Syria, and Pekah the son of Remaliah, the king of Israel, conspired against Judah, and seemed to be sure of their purpose; of which we have spoken already. So it was again in Hezekiah's time, when Sennacherib, that great king of Assyria, and head of the greatest monarchy then in the world, came up against all the fenced cities of Judah, after he had conquered most of the neighbouring countries. He sent Rabshakeh, the captain of his host, against Jerusalem, who in a very proud and scornful manner insulted Hezekiah and his people, as being sure of victory; and the people were trembling for fear, like lambs before a lion. Then God sent Isaiah the prophet to comfort them, and assure them that their enemies should not prevail; as a token of which he gave them this sign, viz. that the earth, for two years successively, should bring forth food of itself, from the roots of the old stalks, without their ploughing or sowing; and then the third year they should sow and reap, and plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them, and live on the fruits of their labour, as they were wont to do before. (See 2 Kings xix. 29.) This is mentioned as a type of what is promised in verse 30, 31. "And the remnant that is escaped of the house of Judah, shall yet again take root downward, and bear fruit upward. For out of Jerusalem shall go forth a remnant, and they that escape out of Mount Zion: the zeal of the Lord of hosts shall do this." The corn springing again after it had been cut off with the sickle, and bringing forth another crop from the roots, represents the church reviving again, and flourishing, like a plant after it had seemingly been cut down past recovery. When the enemies of the church have done their utmost, and seem to have gained their point; when they have overthrown the church, so that its being is scarcely visible, but is like a living root hid under ground; there is in it a secret life that will cause it to flourish again, and to take root downward, and bear fruit upward. This was now fulfilled. The king of Assyria had already carried captive the ten tribes; and Sennacherib had also taken all the fenced cities of Judah, and ranged the country round about; and Jerusalem only remained: and Rabshakeh had in his own imagination already swallowed that up, as he had also in the fearful apprehensions of the Jews themselves. But God wrought a wonderful deliverance;

he sent an angel, that in one night smote an hundred fourscore and five thousand in the enemy's camp.

XIX. In the reign of Uzziah, and the following reigns, God was pleased to raise up a set of eminent prophets, who should commit their prophecies to writing, and leave them for the use of his church in all ages. We before observed, how that God began a constant succession of prophets in Israel in Samuel's time, and many of these prophets wrote by divine inspiration, and so added to the canon of Sripture. But none of them are supposed to have written *books of prophecies* till now. Several of them wrote *histories* of the wonderful dispensations of God towards his church. This we have observed already of Samuel, who is supposed to have written Judges and Ruth, and part of the first of Samuel, if not the book of Joshua. And Nathan and Gad seem to have written the rest of the two books of Samuel: and Nathan with Ahijah and Iddo, wrote the history of Solomon, which is probably that which we have in the first book of Kings. The history of Israel seems to have been further carried on by Iddo and Shemaiah: 2 Chron. xii. 15. "Now the acts of Rehoboam, first and last, are they not written in the book of Shemaiah the prophet; and Iddo the seer, concerning genealogies?" And after that the history seems to have been further carried on by the prophet Jehu, the son of Hanani: 2 Chron. xx. 34. "Now the rest of the Acts of Jehoshaphat, first and last, behold they are written in the book of Jehu, son of Hanani, who is mentioned in the book of the kings of Israel." 1 Kings xvi. 1, 7. And then it was further continued by the prophet Isaiah: 2 Chron. xxvi. 22. "Now the rest of the acts of Uzziah, first and last, did Isaiah the prophet the son of Amos write." He probably did it as well in the second book of Kings, as in the book of his prophecy. And the history was carried on and finished by other prophets after him.

Thus the prophets, even from Samuel's time, had been adding to the canon of scripture by their historical writings. But now, in the days of Uzziah, did God first raise up a set of great prophets, not only to write histories, but to write books of their prophecies. The first of these is thought to be Hosea, the son of Beeri, and therefore his prophecy, or the word of the Lord by him, is called the *beginning of the word of the Lord;* Hos. i. 2. "The beginning of the word of the Lord by Hosea;" that is, the beginning, or the first part, of the written word of that kind, viz. that which is written in books of prophecy. He prophesied in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah, and in the days of Jeroboam, the son of Joash, king of Israel. There were many other witnesses for God raised up about the same time to commit their prophecies to writing, Isaiah, Amos, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, and

probably some others: and so from that time forward God seemed to continue a succession of *writing* prophets.

This was a great dispensation of providence, and a great advance made in the affair of redemption, which will appear if we consider that the main business of the prophets was to point out Christ and his redemption. They were all forerunners of the great prophet. The main end why the spirit of prophecy was given them was, that they might give testimony to Jesus Christ, the great Redeemer, who was to come. Therefore, the testimony of Jesus, and the spirit of prophecy, are spoken of as the same thing; Rev. xix. 10. "And I fell at his feet to worship him: and he said unto me, See thou do it not: I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus: worship of God: for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy." And therefore we find that the great and main thing that the most of the prophets in their written prophecies insist upon, is Christ and his redemption, and the glorious times of the gospel. And though many other things were spoken of in their prophecies, yet they seem to be only as introductory to their prophecy of these great things. Whatever they predict, here their prophecies commonly terminate.

These prophets, inspired by the Spirit of Christ, wrote chiefly to prepare the way for his coming, and to exhibit the glory that should follow. And in what an exalted strain do they all speak of those things! Many other things they speak of in men's usual language. But when they enter upon this subject, what a joyful heavenly sublimity is there in their language! Some of them are very particular and full in their predictions of these things, and above all, the prophet Isaiah, who is therefore deservedly called the *evangelical prophet*. He seems to teach the glorious doctrines of the gospel almost as plainly as the apostles did. The apostle Paul therefore takes notice, that the prophet Esaias is very *bold*, Rom. x. 20; *i. e.* according to the meaning of the word in the New Testament, is very *plain*, he speaks out very plainly and fully; so being *very bold* is used 2 Cor. iii. 12: we use *great plainness of speech*, or *boldness*, as in the margin.

How plainly and fully does the prophet Isaiah describe the manner and circumstances, the nature and end, of the sufferings and sacrifice of Christ, in the 53d chapter of his prophecy. There is scarce a chapter in the New Testament itself which is more full upon it! and how much, and in what a glorious strain does the same prophet speak from time to time, of the glorious benefits of Christ, the unspeakable blessings which shall redound to his church through his redemption! Jesus Christ, of whom this prophet spoke so much, once appeared to him in the form of the

human nature, the nature he should afterwards take upon him. We have an account of it in the 6th chapter of his prophecy at the beginning: "I saw also the Lord sitting on a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple, &c." This was Christ, as we are expressly told in the New Testament. (See John xii. 39—41.)

And if we consider the abundant prophecies of this and the other prophets, what a great increase is there of gospel light! How plentiful are the revelations and prophecies of Christ, compared with what they were in the first period of the Old Testament, from Adam to Noah; or to what they were in the second, from Noah to Abraham; or to what they were before Moses, or in the time of Moses, Joshua, and the Judges! This dispensation was also a glorious advance of the work of redemption by the great additions that were made to the canon of scripture. Great part of the Old Testament was written now from the days of Uzziah to the captivity into Babylon. And how excellent are those portions of it! What a precious treasure have those prophets committed to the church of God, tending greatly to comfirm the gospel of Christ! and which has been of great comfort and benefit to God's church in all ages since. and doubtless will be to the end of the world.

PART VI.

From the Babylonish Captivity to the coming of Christ.

I COME now to the *last subordinate period* of the Old Testament, viz. that which begins with the *Babylonish captivity*, and extends to *the coming of Christ*, being near six hundred years; and shall endeavour to show how the work of redemption was carried on through this period.—But before I enter upon particulars, I would observe three things wherein this period is distinguished from the preceding ones.

1. Though we have no account of a great part of this period in the scripture history, yet the events of it are more the subject of scripture prophecy, than any of the preceding periods. There are two ways wherein the scriptures give account of the events by which the work of redemption is carried on: one is by *history*, and another is by *prophecy:* and in one or the other of these ways we have in the scriptures an

account how the work of redemption is carried on from the beginning to the end. Although the scriptures do not contain the proper *history* of the whole, yet the whole chain of great events by which this affair hath been carried on from the commencement to the finishing of it, is found either in history or *prophecy*. And it is to be observed, that where the scripture is wanting in one of these ways, it is made up in the other. Where scripture history fails, there prophecy takes place; so that the account is still carried on, and the chain is not broken, till we come to the very last link of it in the consummation of all things.

And accordingly it is observable of this space of time, that though it is so much less the subject of scripture history, than most of the preceding periods, (there being above four hundred years of which the scriptures give us no history,) yet its events are more the subject of prophecy, than those of all the preceding periods put together. Most of those remarkable prophecies of the book of Daniel and most of those in Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel, against Babylon, Tyrus, Egypt, and many other nations, were fulfilled in this period.

Hence the reason why the scriptures give us no history of so great a part of this time, is not because the events were not so important, or less worthy of notice, than those of the foregoing periods; for they were great and remarkable. But there are several reasons which may be given for it. One is, that it was the will of God that the spirit of prophecy should cease in this period, (for reasons that may be given hereafter;) so that there were no prophets to write the history of these times; and therefore God designing this, took care that the great events of this period should not be without mention in his word. It is observable, that the *writing* prophets in Israel, were raised up at the latter end of the foregoing period, and at the beginning of this; for the time was now approaching, when, the spirit of prophecy having ceased, there was to be no inspired history, and therefore no other scripture account but what was given in prophecy.

Another reason may be, for the suspension of inspired history, that God in his providence took care, that there should be authentic and full accounts of the events of this period preserved in *profane* history. It is very worthy of notice, that with respect to the events of the five preceding subordinate periods, of which the scriptures give the history, profane history gives us no account, or at least of but very few of them. There are many fabulous and uncertain accounts of things that happened before; but the commencement of *authentic* profane history is judged to be about a hundred years before Nebuchadnezzar's time. The learned Greeks and

Romans used to call the ages before that *the fabulous age;* but the times after that they called *the historical age.* And from about that time to the coming of Christ, we have undoubted accounts in profane history of the principal events; accounts that wonderfully agree with the many prophecies that relate to those times.

Thus the great God who disposes all things, took care to give an *historical* account of things from the beginning of the world, through all those former ages concerning which profane history is silent; and ceased not till he came to those ages in which profane history related things with some certainty. And concerning those times he gives us abundant account in *prophecy*, that by comparing profane history with those prophecies we might see the agreement.

2. This last period of the Old Testament seems to have been remarkably distinguished from all others by great revolutions among the nations of the earth, to make way for the kingdom of Christ. The time now drawing nigh, wherein Christ, the great King and Saviour of the world, was to come, great and mighty were the changes that were brought to pass in order to it. The way had been preparing for the coming of Christ from the fall of man, through all the foregoing periods; but now, the time drawing nigh, things began to ripen apace for his coming; and therefore divine providence now wrought wonderfully. The greatest revolutions that any history has recorded, since the flood, fell out in this period. Almost all the nations far and near, within the knowledge of the Jews, were overturned again and again. All lands were in their turns subdued, captivated, and as it were emptied, and turned upside down, and that most of them repeatedly, in this period; agreeable to that prophecy, Is. xxiv. 1. "Behold the Lord maketh the earth empty; he maketh it waste, and turneth it upside down, and scattereth abroad the inhabitants thereof."

This began with God's visible church, in their captivity by the king of Babylon. And then the cup from them went round to all other nations, agreeable to what God revealed to the prophet Jeremiah, xxv. 15—27. Here special respect seems to be had to the great revolutions in the times of the Babylonish empire. But after that there were three general overturnings before Christ came, in the succession of the three great monarchies of the world, after the Babylonish empire. The king of Babylon is represented in scripture as overturning the world; but after that, the Babylonish empire was overthrown by Cyrus, who founded the Persian empire in the room of it; which was of much greater extent than the Babylonish empire in its greatest glory. Thus the world was overturned the second time. And then, the Persian empire was overthrown by Alex-

ander, and the Grecian set up, which was still of much greater extent than the Persian. And thus there was a general overturning of the world a third time. After that, the Grecian empire was overthrown by the Romans, and the Roman empire was established; which vastly exceeded all the foregoing empires in power and extent of dominion. And so the world was overturned the fourth time.

These several monarchies, and the great revolutions of the world under them, are abundantly spoken of in the prophecies of Daniel. They are represented in Nebuchadnezzar's image of gold, silver, brass, and iron, and Daniel's interpretation of it, (Dan. ii.) in the vision of the four beasts, and the angel's interpretation of it, (Dan. vii.) And the succession of the Persian and Grecian monarchies is more particularly represented in the 8th chapter, in Daniel's vision of the ram and the he-goat, and again in the 11th chapter.

Beside these four general overturnings, the world was kept in a constant tumult between whiles; and indeed in a continual convulsion through this whole period. Before, the face of the earth was comparatively in quietness; though there were many great wars among the nations, yet we read of no such mighty and universal convulsions and overturnings as there were in this period. The nations of the world, most of them, had long remained on their lees, without being emptied from vessel to vessel, as is said of Moab, Jer. xlviii. 11. Now these great overturnings were because the time of the great Messiah drew nigh. That they were to prepare the way for Christ's coming, is evident by scripture, particularly by Ezek. xxi. 27. "I will overturn, overturn, overturn it, and it shall be no more, until he come whose right it is, and I will give it him." The prophet, by repeating the word *overturn* three times, has respect to three overturnings, as in the Revelation, viii. 13. The repetition of the word *woe* three times, signifies three distinct woes; as appears by what follows, ix. 12. *One woe is past;* and xi. 14. *The second woe is past, and behold the third woe cometh quickly.*

It must be noted that the prophet Ezekiel prophesied in the time of the Babylonish captivity; and therefore there were three great and general overturnings to come after this prophecy, before Christ came; the first by the Persians, the second by the Grecians, the third by the Romans; and then Christ, whose right it was to take the diadem, and reign, should come. Here these great overturnings are evidently spoken of as preparatory to the coming and kingdom of Christ. But to understand the words aright, we must note the particular expression, "I will overturn, overturn, overturn *it*." i. e. the diadem and crown of Israel, or the supreme

temporal dominion over God's visible people. This God said should be no more, *i. e.* the crown should be taken off, and the diadem removed, as it is said in the foregoing verse. The supreme power over Israel should be no more in the royal line of David, to which it properly belonged, but should be removed away, and given to others, and overturned from one to another; first the supreme power over Israel should be in the hands of the Persians; then it should be overturned, and be in the hands of the Grecians; and then it should be overturned again, and come into the hands of the Romans, and be no more in the line of David, till that very person should come who was the son of David, whose proper right it was, and then God would give it to him.

That those great shakings and revolutions of the nations of the world, were all to prepare the way for Christ's coming, and setting up his kingdom in the world, is further manifest by Haggai ii. 6, 7. "For thus saith the Lord of hosts, Yet once, it is a little while, and I will shake the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land: and I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come, and I will fill this house with glory, saith the Lord of hosts." And again ver. 21—23. It is evident by this, that these great revolutions and shakings of the nations, whereby the thrones of kingdoms and their armies were overthrown, and every one came down by the sword of his brother, were to prepare the way for the coming of him who is the desire of all nations.

The great changes and troubles that have sometimes been in the visible church of Christ, (Rev. xi. 2,) are compared to the church's being in travail to bring forth Christ; so these great troubles and mighty revolutions, were, as it were, the world's being in travail to bring forth the Son of God. The apostle in the 8th of Romans, represents the whole creation as groaning and travailing in pain together until now, to bring forth the liberty and manifestation of the children of God.—So the world, as it were, travailed in pain, and was in continual convulsions, for several hundred years together, to bring forth the first-born child, and the only begotten Son of God. And those mighty revolutions were as so many pangs and throes in order to it. The world being so long a time kept in a state of war and bloodshed, prepared the way for the coming of the Prince of peace, as it showed the great need the world stood in of such a prince, to deliver the world from its miseries.

It pleased God to order it in his providence, that earthly power and dominion should be raised to its greatest height, and appear in its utmost glory, in those four great monarchies that succeeded one another, and that every one should be greater and more glorious than the preceding, before he set

up the kingdom of his Son. By this it appeared how much more glorious his spiritual kingdom was than the most glorious temporal kingdom. The strength and glory of Satan's kingdom in these four mighty monarchies, appeared in its greatest height: for, being the monarchies of the Heathen world, the strength of them was the strength of Satan's kingdom. God suffered Satan's kingdom to rise to so great a height of power and magnificence before his Son came to overthrow it, in order to prepare the way for the more glorious triumph of his Son. Goliath must have on all his splendid armour when the stripling David comes against him with a sling and a stone for the greater glory of David's victory. God suffered one of those great monarchies to subdue another, and erect itself on the others' ruins, appearing still in greater strength, and the last to be the strongest and mightiest of all; that so Christ, in overthrowing that, might as it were overthrow them all at once. The stone cut out of the mountain without hands, is represented as destroying the whole image, the gold, the silver, the brass, the iron, and the clay; so that all became as the chaff of the summer threshing-floor.

These mighty empires were suffered thus to overthrow the world, and destroy one another. And though their power was so great, yet they could not uphold themselves, but fell one after another, and came to nothing; even the last of them, which was the strongest, and had swallowed up the earth. It pleased God thus to show in them the instability and vanity of all earthly power and greatness; which served as a foil to set forth the glory of the kingdom of his Son, which never shall be destroyed, Dan. ii. 44. "In the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces, and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever." So greatly does this kingdom differ from all those kingdoms: they vanish away, and are left to other people; but this shall not be so left, but shall stand for ever. God suffered the devil to do his utmost, and to establish his interest, by setting up the greatest, strongest, and most glorious kingdoms in the world, before the despised Jesus overthrew him and his empire. Christ came into the world to bring down the high things of Satan's kingdom, that the hand of the Lord might be on every one that is proud and lofty, and every high tower, and every lofty mountain; as the prophet Isaiah says, chap. ii. 12, &c. And therefore these things were suffered to rise very high, that Christ might appear so much the more glorious in being above them. Thus wonderfully did the great and wise governor of the world prepare the way for the erecting of the glorious kingdom of his beloved son Jesus.

3. Another thing for which this last space of time before Christ was particularly remarkable, was the wonderful preservation of the church through all those overturnings. The preservation of the church was on some accounts more remarkable through this period, than through any of the foregoing. It was very wonderful that the church, which now was so weak, and in so low a state, and mostly subject to the dominion of Heathen monarchies, should be preserved for five or six hundred years together, while the world was so often overturned, and the earth was rent in pieces, and made so often empty and waste, and the inhabitants of it came down so often every one by the sword of his brother. I say, it was wonderful that the church in its weak and low state, being but a little handful of men should be preserved in all these great convulsions; especially considering that the land of Judea, the chief place of the church's residence, lay in the midst of the contending parties, was very much the seat of war amongst them, and was often over-run and subdued. It was sometimes in the hands of one people, and sometimes another, and very much the object of the envy and hatred of all heathen nations. It was often almost ruined by them, often great multitudes of its inhabitants being slain, and the land in a great measure depopulated; and those who had them in their power, often intended the utter destruction of the whole nation. Yet they were upheld; they were preserved in their captivity in Babylon, in all the dangers they passed through under the kings of Persia, in the much greater dangers under the empire of the Greeks, and afterwards when the world was trodden down by the Romans.

Their preservation through this period was also peculiarly remarkable, in that we never read of the church suffering persecution in any former period in any measure to such a degree as they did in this, under Antiochus Epiphanes, of which more afterwards. This wonderful preservation of the church through all these overturnings of the world, gives light and confirmation to what we read in the beginning of the 46th Psalm: "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; though the waters thereof roar, and be troubled; though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof." Thus I have taken notice of some *general* things wherein this last period of the Old Testament times was distinguished. I come now to consider how the work of redemption was carried on in *particulars*.

I. The first thing that here offers, is the captivity of the Jews into Babylon. This was a great dispensation of provi-

dence, and such as never was before. The children of Israel in the time of the Judges, had often been brought under their enemies; and many particular persons were carried captive at other times. But never had there been any such thing as destroying the whole land, the sanctuary, and the city of Jerusalem, and all the cities and villages of the land, and carrying the whole body of the people out of their own land into a country many hundred miles distant, and leaving the land of Canaan empty of God's visible people. The ark had once forsaken the tabernacle of Shiloh, and was carried captive into the land of the Philistines: but never had there been any such thing as burning the sanctuary, utterly destroying the ark, carrying away all the sacred vessels and utensils, breaking up all their stated worship in the land, and the land lying waste and empty for so many years together. How lively are those things set forth in the Lamentations of Jeremiah! The work of redemption was promoted by this remarkable dispensation in these following ways.

1. It finally cured that nation of their idolatry. The prophet Isaiah, speaking of the setting up of the kingdom of Christ, (chap. ii. 18,) speaks of the abolishing of idolatry as one thing that should be done to this end: *And the idols he shall utterly abolish.* When the time was drawing near, that God would abolish Heathen idolatry, through the greater part of the known world, as he did by the preaching of the gospel, it pleased him first to abolish Heathenism among his own people; which he did by their captivity into Babylon. This was a presage of that abolition of idols, which God was about to bring to pass by Christ through so great a part of the Heathen world.

This nation, that was addicted to idolatry for so many ages, notwithstanding all reproofs, warnings, corrections, and all the judgments God inflicted on them for it, were now finally cured. So that however some might fall into this sin afterwards, as they did about the time of Antiochus' persecution, yet the nation, as a nation, never shewed any propensity to this sin any more. This was a remarkable and wonderful change in that people, and what directly promoted the work of redemption, as it was a great advancement of the interest of religion.

2. One thing that prepared the way for Christ's coming, and for setting up the glorious dispensation of the gospel, was the taking away many of those things wherein consisted the glory of the Jewish dispensation. In order to introduce the glorious dispensation of the gospel, the external glory of the Jewish church must be diminished. This the Babylonish captivity did many ways.

First, it removed the temporal dominion of the house of

David, *i. e.* the supreme and independent government of themselves. It took away the crown and diadem from the nation. The time now approaching when Christ, the great and everlasting king of his church, was to reign, it was time for the typical kings to withdraw. As God said by Ezekiel, ch. xxi. 26. "He removed the crown and diadem, that it might be no more, till he should come whose right it was." The Jews henceforward were always dependent on the governing power of other nations, until Christ came, for near six hundred years; except about ninety years, during which space they maintained a sort of independence by continual wars under the dominion of the Maccabees and their posterity.

Again, by the captivity, the glory and magnificence of the temple were taken away, and the temple that was built afterwards, was nothing in comparison with it. Thus it was meet, that when the time drew nigh that the glorious antetype of the temple should appear, that the typical temple should have its glory withdrawn.

Moreover, they lost by the captivity the two tables of the testimony delivered to Moses, on which God with his own finger wrote the ten commandments on Mount Sinai. These seem to have been preserved in the ark till the captivity.—These were in the ark when Solomon placed the ark in the temple, 1 Kings viii. 9. "There was nothing in the ark, save the two tables of stone, which Moses put there at Horeb." We have no reason to suppose any other, but that they remained there as long as that temple stood. But the Jews speak of these as finally lost at that time; though the same commandments were preserved in the book of the law. These tables also were withdrawn on the approach of their antetype.

Another thing that was lost was the Urim and Thummim. This is evident by Ezra ii. 63. "And the Tirshatha said unto them, that they should not eat of the most holy things, till there should stand up a priest with Urim and Thummim." We have no account that this was ever restored; though the ancient writings of the Jews say the contrary. What this Urim and Thummim was, I shall not now inquire; but only observe, that it was something by which the high priest inquired of God, and received immediate answers from him, or by which God gave forth immediate oracles on particular occasions. This was now withdrawn, the time approaching when Christ, the antetype of the Urim and Thummim, the great word and oracle of God, was to come.

Another thing that the ancient Jews say was wanting in the second temple, was the Shechinah, or cloud of glory over the mercy-seat. This was promised to be in the tabernacle; Levit. xvi. 2. "For I will appear in the cloud upon the mercy-seat." And we read elsewhere of the cloud of glory descending

into the tabernacle, Exod. xl. 35; and so we do likewise with respect to Solomon's temple. But we have no account that this cloud of glory was in the second temple. And the ancient accounts of the Jews say, that there was no such thing in the second temple. This was needless in the second temple, considering that God had promised that he would fill this temple with glory another way, viz. by Christ's coming into it; which was afterwards fulfilled. See Haggai ii. 7. "I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come, and I will fill this house with glory, saith the Lord of hosts."

When Moses built the tabernacle and altar in the wilderness, and the first sacrifices were offered on it, fire came down from heaven, and consumed the burnt-offering, as in Levit. ix. 24; also when Solomon built the temple, and offered the first sacrifices, 2 Chron. vii. 1. And this fire was never to go out, but to be kept alive with the greatest care, as God commanded, Levit. vi. 13. "The fire shall ever be burning upon the altar; it shall never go out." And there is no reason to suppose the fire kindled in Solomon's time ever went out till the temple was destroyed by the Babylonians. But then it was extinguished, and never was restored. We have no account of its being given on building the second temple, as we have at the building of the tabernacle and first temple. But the Jews, after their return, were forced to make use of their common fire instead of it, according to the ancient tradition of the Jews. Thus the lights of the Old Testament go out on the approach of the glorious Sun of righteousness.

3. The captivity into Babylon occasioned the dispersion of the Jews through the greater part of the known world, before the coming of Christ. For the whole nation being carried away far out of their own land, and continuing in a state of captivity for so long a time, they got possessions, built houses, and settled themselves in the land of their captivity, agreeable to the direction that Jeremiah gave them, (Jer. xxix.) And therefore, when Cyrus gave them liberty to return to the land where they had formerly dwelt, many of them never returned; they were not willing to leave their settlements and possessions there, to go into a desolate country, many hundred miles distant, which none but the old men among them had ever seen; and therefore they were but a small number that returned, as we see in the books of Ezra and Nehemiah. Great numbers tarried behind, though they still retained the same religion with those that returned, so far as it could be practised in a foreign land. Those messengers that we read of in the 7th chapter of Zechariah, that came to inquire of the priests and prophets in Jerusalem, Sherezer and Regemelech, are supposed to be messengers sent from the Jews that remained still in Babylon.

Those Jews who remained in that country were soon, by the great changes that happened in the world, dispersed thence into all the adjacent countries. Hence we find, that in Esther's time, which was after the return from the captivity, the Jews were dispersed throughout all parts of the vast Persian empire, which extended from India to Ethiopia; Esth. iii. 8. "And Haman said unto King Ahasuerus, There is a certain people scattered abroad, and dispersed among the people in all the provinces of thy kingdom," &c. And so they continued dispersed till Christ came, and till the apostles went forth to preach the gospel. But yet these dispersed Jews retained their religion. Their captivity, as before observed, thoroughly cured them of their idolatry; and it was their manner, as many of them as could, to go up to Jerusalem at their great feasts. Hence we read in the 2d chapter of Acts, that at the great feast of Pentecost, there were Jews abiding at Jerusalem out of every nation under heaven. These had come up from all countries where they were dispersed, to worship at that feast. And hence we find, in their history, that wherever the apostles went preaching through the world, they found Jews. They came to one city, and to another city, and went into the synagogue of the Jews.

Antiochus the great, about two hundred years before Christ, on a certain occasion, transplanted two thousand families of Jews from the country about Babylon into Asia the Less; and so they and their posterity, many of them, settled in Pontus, Galatia, Phrygia, Pamphylia, and in Ephesus; and from thence settled in Athens, and Corinth, and Rome. Whence came the synagogues in those places in which the apostle Paul preached.—Now, this dispersion of the Jews through the world before Christ came, did many ways prepare the way for his coming, and setting up his kingdom in the world.

This was a means of raising a general expectation of the Messiah through the world, about the time that he actually came. For the Jews, wherever they were dispersed, carried the holy scriptures with them, and so the prophecies of the Messiah; and being conversant with the nations among whom they lived, they, by that means, became acquainted with these prophecies, and with the expectations of the Jews concerning their glorious Messiah. Hence, the birth of such a glorious person in Judea, about that time, began to be the general expectation of all nations, as appears by the writings of learned Heathens, which are still extant; particularly the famous poet Virgil, who lived in Italy a little before Christ, has a poem about the expectation of a great prince that was to be born, and the happy times of righteousness and peace he was to introduce; some of it very much in the language of the prophet Isaiah.

Another way by which this dispersed state of the Jews prepared the way for Christ was, that it shewed the necessity of abolishing the Jewish dispensation, and introducing a new dispensation of the covenant of grace. It shewed the necessity of abolishing the ceremonial law, and the old Jewish worship: for, by this means, the observance of that ceremonial law became impracticable even by the Jews themselves. The ceremonial law was adapted to the state of a people dwelling together in the same land, where was the city which God had chosen; where was the temple, the only place where they might offer sacrifices; and where alone it was lawful for their priests and Levites to officiate, where they were to bring their first fruits, where were their cities of refuge and the like. But by this dispersion many of the Jews lived more than a thousand miles distant, when Christ came; which made the observance of their laws of sacrifices, and the like, impracticable. And though their forefathers might be to blame in not going up to the land of Judea when they were permitted by Cyrus, yet the case was now, as to many of them at least, become impracticable; which shewed the necessity of introducing a new dispensation, that should be fitted, not only to one particular land, but to the general circumstances and use of all nations of the world.

Again, this universal dispersion of the Jews contributed to make the facts concerning Jesus Christ publicly known through the world. For, as observed before, the Jews who lived in other countries, used frequently to go up to Jerusalem at their three great feasts, from year to year; by which means, they could not but become acquainted with the wonderful things that Christ did in that land. We find that the great miracle of raising Lazarus excited the curiosity of those foreign Jews who came up at the feast of the Passover to see Jesus; John xii. 19—21. These Greeks were foreign Jews and proselytes, as is evident by their coming to worship at the feast of the Passover. The Jews who lived abroad among the Greeks, and spoke their language, were called Greeks, Hellenists, and Grecians, Acts vi. 1. These were not Gentile Christians; for this occurred before the calling of the Gentiles.

By the same means the Jews who went up from other countries became acquainted with Christ's crucifixion. Thus the disciples going to Emmaus say to Christ, whom they did not know, (Luke xxiv. 18.) "Art thou only a stranger in Jerusalem, and hast not known the things which have come to pass there in these days;" plainly intimating that the things concerning Jesus were so publicly known to all men, that it was wonderful to find any man unacquainted with them. And so afterwards they became acquainted with the news of his resurrection; and when they returned into their own countries, they carried the news with them, and made these *facts* public

through the world, as before they had made the *prophecies* of them.

After this, those foreign Jews who came to Jerusalem, took great notice of the pouring out of the Spirit at Pentecost, and the wonderful effects of it; and many of them were converted by it. There were Parthians, Medes, Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, and in Egypt, and the parts of Libya about Cyrene, and the strangers of Rome, Jews and proselytes, Cretes and Arabians. And so they not only carried back the news of these facts, but Christianity itself, into their own countries with them; which contributed much to the spreading of it through the world.

Again, the dispersion of the Jews opened a door for the introduction of the apostles in all places where they came to preach the gospel. For almost in all places where they came to preach the gospel, they found synagogues of the Jews, where the holy scriptures were wont to be read, and the true God worshipped; which was a great advantage to the apostles in spreading the gospel through the world. For their way was, into whatever city they came, first to go into the synagogue of the Jews, (they being of the same nation,) and there to preach the gospel unto them. And hereby their new doctrine was taken notice of by their Gentile neighbours, whose curiosity excited them to hear what they had to say; which became a fair occasion to the apostles to preach the gospel to them. This is the account we have in the Acts of the Apostles. And these Gentiles had been before, many of them, prepared in some measure, by the knowledge they had of the Jewish religion, of their worship of one God, their prophecies, and expectation of a Messiah. This knowledge they derived from the Jews who had long been their neighbours; which opened the door for the gospel to have access to them. And the work of the apostles with them was doubtless much easier, than if they never had heard any thing before of such a person as the apostles preached, or any thing about the worship of one only true God. So many ways did the Babylonish captivity greatly prepare the way for Christ's coming.

II. The next particular that I would notice is, the addition made to the canon of scripture in the time of the captivity, in those two remarkable portions of scripture, the prophecies of Ezekiel and Daniel. Christ appeared to each of these prophets in the form of that nature which he was afterwards to take upon him. The prophet Ezekiel gives an account of his thus appearing to him repeatedly, as Ezek. i. 26. "And above the firmament that was over their heads, was the likeness of a throne, as the appearance of a sapphire-stone, and upon the likeness of the throne was the likeness as the appearance of a man above upon it;" and so chap. viii. 1, 2. So Christ ap-

peared to the prophet Daniel: Dan. viii. 15, 16. "There stood before me as the appearance of a man. And I heard a man's voice between the banks of Ulai, which called, and said, Gabriel, make this man to understand the vision." There are several things which make it evident, that this was Christ; but I cannot now stand to mention particulars. Christ appeared again as a man to this prophet, Dan. x. 5, 6. "Then I lift up mine eyes and looked, and behold, a certain man clothed in linen, whose loins were girded with fine gold of Uphaz. his body also was like the beryl, and his face as the appearance of lightning, and his eyes as lamps of fire, and his arms and his feet like in colour to polished brass, and the voice of his words like the voice of a multitude." Comparing this vision with that of the apostle John, in the 1st chapter of Revelation, makes it manifest that this person was Christ. And the prophet Daniel, in the historical part of his book, gives an account of a very remarkable appearance of Christ in Nebuchadezzar's furnace, with Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. Dan. iii. 25. "Lo, I see four *men* loose,—and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God."

Christ not only appeared here in the form of the human nature, but he appeared in a furnace, saving those persons who believed on him from that furnace; by which is represented to us, how Christ, by coming himself into the furnace of God's wrath, saves those that believe in him from that furnace, so that it has no power on them; and the wrath of God never reaches or touches them, so much as to singe the hair of their head.

These two prophets, in many respects, were more particular concerning the coming of Christ, and his glorious gospel-kingdom, than any of the prophets had been before. They mention those three great overturnings of the world that should be before he came. Ezekiel is particular in several places concerning the coming of Christ. The prophet Daniel is more particular in foretelling the time of Christ's coming than ever any prophet had been before, (chap. ix.) He foretold, that it should be seventy weeks, *i. e.* seventy weeks of years, or seventy times seven years, which is four hundred and ninety years, from the decree to rebuild and restore the state of the Jews, till the Messiah should be crucified. This must be reckoned from the commission given to Ezra by Artaxerxes, whereby the very particular time of Christ's crucifixion was pointed out, which never had been before. (Ezra vii.)

The prophet Ezekiel is very particular in the mystical description of the gospel-church, in his vision of the temple and city, towards the latter part of his prophecy. The prophet Daniel points out the order of particular events that should come to pass relating to the Christian church after Christ was come, as the rise of Antichrist, the continuance

of his reign, his fall, and the glory that should follow. Thus does the gospel-light still increase, the nearer we come to the time of Christ's birth.

III. The next particular I would mention is, the destruction of Babylon, and the overthrow of the Chaldean empire by Cyrus. The destruction of Babylon took place on that night in which Belshazzar the king, and the city in general, were drowned in a drunken festival, which they kept in honour of their gods, when Daniel was called to read the hand-writing on the wall, Dan. v. 30; and it was brought about in such a manner, as wonderfully to show the hand of God, and remarkably to fulfil his word by his prophets, which I cannot now stand particularly to relate. Now that great city, which had long been an enemy to the city of God, was destroyed, after it had stood ever since the first building of Babel, which was about seventeen hundred years. If the check which was put to the building of this city at its beginning, whereby they were prevented from carrying it to that extent and magnificence they intended, promoted the work of redemption, much more did this destruction of it.

This was a remarkable instance of God's vengeance on the enemies of his redeemed church; for God brought destruction on Babylon for the injuries they did to God's children, as is often set forth in the prophets. It also promoted the work of redemption, as thereby God's people who were held captive by them, were set at liberty to return to their own land in order to rebuild Jerusalem; and therefore Cyrus is called God's shepherd, Is. xliv. and xlv. I. And these are over and above those ways wherein the setting up and overthrowing the four monarchies of the world did promote the work of redemption.

IV. What next followed was the return of the Jews to their own land, and the rebuilding of Jerusalem and the temple. Cyrus, as soon as he had destroyed the Babylonish, and erected the Persian empire on its ruins, made a decree in favour of the Jews, that they might return to their own land, and rebuild their city and temple. This return of the Jews out of the Babylonish captivity is, next to the redemption out of Egypt, the most remarkable of all the Old Testament redemptions, and most insisted on in scripture, as a type of the great redemption of Jesus Christ. It was under the hand of one of the legal ancestors of Christ, viz. Zerubbabel, the son of Shealtiel, whose Babylonish name was Sheshbazzar. He was the governor of the Jews, and their leader in their first return out of captivity; and, together with Joshua the son of Josedek the high priest, had the chief hand in rebuilding the temple. This redemption was brought about by the hand of Zerubbabel and Joshua the priest, as the redemption

out of Egypt was brought about by the hand of Moses and Aaron.

The return out of the captivity was a remarkable dispensation of Providence. It was remarkable, that the heart of a Heathen prince, Cyrus, should be so inclined to favour such a design. He not only gave the people liberty to return, and rebuild the city and temple, but gave charge that they should be helped with silver and gold, with goods and beasts, as we read in Ezra i. 4. And afterwards God wonderfully inclined the heart of Darius to further the building of the house of God with his own tribute-money, and gave command to their bitter enemies, the Samaritans, who had been striving to hinder them, to help them without fail, by furnishing them with all that they needed in order to it, and to supply them day by day. He made a decree that whosoever failed of it, timber should be pulled down out of his house, and he hanged thereon, and his house made a dunghill, (Ezra. vi.) After this God inclined the heart of Artaxerxes, another king of Persia, to promote the work of preserving the state of the Jews, by his ample commission to Ezra, (Ezra vii.) He helped them abundantly with silver and gold out of his own bounty, and offered more, as should be needful, out of the king's treasure-house, commanding his treasurers beyond the river Euphrates to give more, as should be needed, unto a hundred talents of silver, a hundred measures of wheat, a hundred baths of wine, a hundred baths of oil, and salt, without prescribing how much. He gave leave to establish magistrates in the land; freeing the priests of toll, tribute, custom, and other things, which render this decree by Artaxerxes the most full and ample in the Jews' favour of any that had been given for the restoring of Jerusalem; and therefore, in Daniel's prophecy, this is called *the decree* for restoring and building Jerusalem; and hence the seventy weeks are dated.

After this, another favourable commission was granted by the king of Persia to Nehemiah, (chap. ii.)—It was remarkable, that the hearts of Heathen princes should be so inclined. It was the effect of *his* power, who hath the hearts of kings in his hands, and turneth them whithersoever he will; and it was a remarkable instance of his favour to his people.

Another remarkable circumstance of this restitution of the state of the Jews to their own land was, that it was accomplished against so much opposition of their bitter indefatigable enemies, the Samaritans, who, for a long time together, with all the malice and craft they could exercise, opposed the Jews in this affair, and sought their destruction. One while they were opposed by Bishlam, Mithridath, Tabeel, Rehum, and Shimshai, as in Ezra iv.; and then by Tatnai, Shetharboznai, and their companions, as in chap. v.; and after-

wards by Sanballat and Tobiah, as we read in the book of Nehemiah.

We have shewed before, how the settlement of the people in this land in Joshua's time promoted the work of redemption. On the same accounts does their restitution belong to the same work. The re-settlement of the Jews in the land of Canaan belongs to this work, as it was a necessary means of preserving the Jewish church and dispensation in being, till Christ should come. If it had not been for this restoration of the Jewish church, temple, and worship, the people had remained without any temple, or land of their own, that should be as it were their head-quarters, a place of worship, habitation, and resort. The whole constitution, which God had done so much to establish, would have been in danger of utterly failing, long before the six hundred years had expired, which was from about the time of the captivity till Christ. And so all that preparation which God had been making for the coming of Christ, from the time of Abraham, would have been in vain. Now that very temple was built that God would fill with glory by Christ's coming into it, as the prophets Haggai and Zechariah told the Jews in order to encourage them in building it.

V. The next particular I would observe, is the addition made to the canon of the scriptures soon after the captivity by the prophets Haggai and Zechariah, who were prophets sent to encourage the people in their work of rebuilding the city and temple; and the main argument they use to that end, is the approach of the coming of Christ. Haggai foretold that Christ should be of Zerubbabel's legal posterity. This seems to be the last and most particular revelation of the descent of Christ, till the angel Gabriel was sent to reveal it to his mother Mary.

VI. The next thing I would take notice of, was the pouring out of the Spirit of God that accompanied the ministry of Ezra the priest after the captivity. That there was such an effusion of the Spirit of God, that accompanied Ezra's ministry, is manifest by many things in the books of Ezra and Nehemiah. Presently after Ezra came up from Babylon, with the ample commission which Artaxerxes gave him, whence Daniel's seventy weeks began, he set himself to reform the vices and corruptions he found among the Jews; and his great success in it we have an account of in the 10th chapter of Ezra. So that there appeared a very general and great mourning of the congregation of Israel for their sins, which was accompanied with a solemn covenant that the people entered into with God; and this was followed with a great and general reformation, as we have there an account. And the people about the same time, with great zeal, earnestness, and reve-

rence, gathered themselves together to hear the word of God read by Ezra; and gave diligent attention, while Ezra and the other priests preached to them, by reading and expounding the law, and were greatly affected in the hearing of it. They wept when they heard the words of the law, and set themselves to observe it, and kept the feast of tabernacles, as the scripture observes, after such a manner as it had not been kept since the days of Joshua the son of Nun, (Nehem. viii.) After this, having separated themselves from all strangers, they solemnly observed a fast, by hearing the word, confessing their sins, and renewing their covenant with God. And they manifested their sincerity in that transaction, by actually reforming many abuses in religion and morals; as we learn from the 9th and following chapters of Nehemiah.

It is observable, that it has been God's manner, in every remarkable new establishment of the state of his visible church, to afford a remarkable outpouring of his Spirit. So it was on the first establishment of the church of the Jews at their coming into Canaan under Joshua; so it was now in this second settlement of the church in the time of Ezra; and so it was on the first establishment of the Christian church after Christ's resurrection; God wisely and graciously laying the foundation of those establishments in a work of the Holy Spirit, for the lasting benefit of his church, thenceforward continued in those establishments. And this pouring out of the Spirit was a final cure of the nation of that particular sin which just before they especially run into, viz. intermarrying with the Gentiles: for however inclined to it they were before, they ever after shewed an aversion to it.

VII. Ezra added to the canon of the scriptures. He wrote the book of Ezra; and he is supposed to have written the two books of Chronicles, at least of compiling them, if he was not the author of the materials, or all the parts of these writings. That these books were written, or compiled and completed, after the captivity, the things contained in the books themselves make manifest; for the genealogies contained therein, are brought down below the captivity; as 1 Chron. iii. 17, &c. We have there an account of the posterity of Jehoiachin for several successive generations. And there is mention in these books of this captivity into Babylon, as of a thing past, and of things that were done on the return of the Jews after the captivity, (1 Chron. ix.) The chapter is mostly filled up with an account of things that came to pass *after* the captivity into Babylon, as you may see by comparing it with what is said in the books of Ezra and Nehemiah. And that Ezra was the person who compiled these books, is probable by this, because they conclude with words that we know are the

words of Ezra's history. The two last verses are Ezra's words in the history he gives in the two first verses of the book of Ezra.

VIII. Ezra is supposed to have collected all the books of which the holy scriptures did then consist, and disposed them in their proper order. Ezra is often spoken of as a noted and eminent scribe of the law of God, and the canon of scripture in his time was manifestly under his special care. The Jews, from the first accounts we have from them, have always held, that the canon of scripture, so much of it as was then extant, was collected, and orderly disposed and settled by Ezra; and that from him they have delivered it down in the order in which he disposed it, till Christ's time; when the Christian church received it from them, and have delivered it down to our times. The truth of this is allowed as undoubted by divines in general.

IX. The work of redemption was carried on and promoted in this period, by greatly multiplying the copies of the law, and appointing the constant public reading of them in all the cities of Israel in their synagogues. It is evident, that before the captivity, there were but few copies of the law. The original was laid up beside the ark; and the kings were required to write out a copy of it for their use, and the law was required to be read to the whole congregation of Israel once every seventh year. And we have no account of any other stated public reading of the law before the captivity but this. And it is manifested by several things that might be mentioned, that copies of the law were exceeding rare before the captivity. But after this, the constant reading of the law was set up in every synagogue throughout the land. First, they began with reading the law, and then they proceeded to establish the constant reading of the other books of the Old Testament. And lessons were read out of the Old Testament, as made up of both the law and the other parts of the scripture then extant, in all the synagogues, which were set up in every city, and wherever the Jews in any considerable number dwelt. Thus we find it was in the time of Christ and the apostles. Acts xv. 21. "Moses of old time hath in every city them that preach him, being read in the synagogues every sabbath-day." This custom is universally supposed, both by Jews and Christians, to be begun by Ezra. There were doubtless public assembles before the captivity. They used to assemble at the temple at their great feasts, and were directed, when they were at a loss about any thing in the law, to go to the priest for instruction; and they used also to resort to the prophets' houses: and we read of synagogues in the land before, Psal. lxxiv. 8. But it is not supposed that they had copies of the law for constant public reading and expounding through the land before.

This was one great means of their being preserved from idolatry.

X. The next thing I would mention is, God's remarkably preserving the church and nation of the Jews, when they were in imminent danger of being universally destroyed by Haman, as in the book of Esther. This series of providence was very wonderful in preventing this destruction. Esther was doubtless born for this end to be the instrument of this remarkable preservation.

XI. After this the canon of scripture was further enlarged in the books of Nehemiah and Esther; the one by Nehemiah himself. Whether the other was written by Nehemiah, or Mordecai, or Malachi, is not of importance for us to know, so long as it is one of those books that were always admitted and received as a part of their canon by the Jews, and was among those books which the Jews called their scriptures in Christ's time, and as such was approved by him. For Christ often in his speeches to the Jews, manifestly approves and confirms those books, whic amongst them went by the name of the *Scriptures*, as might easily be shown.

XII. After this the canon of the Old Testament was completed and sealed by Malachi. The manner of his concluding his prophecy seems to imply, that they were to expect no more prophecies, and no more written revelations from God, till Christ should come. For in the last chapter he prophesies of Christ's coming; ver. 2, 3. "But unto you that fear my name, shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings; and ye shall go forth and grow up as calves of the stall. And ye shall tread down the wicked; for they shall be as ashes under the soles of your feet, in the day that I shall do this, saith the Lord of hosts." Then we read in ver. 4. "Remember ye the law of Moses my servant, which I commanded unto him in Horeb for all Israel, with the statutes and judgments;" *i. e.* Remember and improve what ye have; keep close to your written rule, as expecting no more additions to it, till the night of the Old Testament is over, and the Sun of righteousness shall at length arise.

XIII. Soon after this, the spirit of prophecy ceased among that people till the time of the New Testament. Thus the Old Testament light, the stars of the long night, began apace to hide their heads, the time of the Sun of righteousness now drawing nigh. We before observed, how the kings of the house of David ceased before the true king and head of the church came; and how the cloud of glory withdrew, before Christ, the brightness of the Father's glory, appeared. And now the spirit of prophecy ceased. The time of the great Prophet of God was now so nigh, it was time for their typical prophets to be silent.

We have now gone through the time of which we have any historical account in the writings of the Old Testament: and the last thing mentioned by which the work of redemption was promoted, was the ceasing of the spirit of prophecy.—I now proceed to show how the work of redemption was carried on through the remaining times before Christ. In this we have not that thread of scripture history to guide us that we have had hitherto; but have these three things, viz. the prophecies of the Old Testament, human histories, and some occasional evidence of things which happened in those times, in the New Testament. Therefore,

XIV. The next particular that I shall mention under this period is, the destruction of the Persian empire, and setting up of the Grecian empire by Alexander. This came to pass about sixty or seventy years after the times wherein the prophet Malachi is supposed to have prophesied, and about three hundred and thirty years before Christ. This was the third revolution that came to pass in this period, and was greater and more remarkable than either of the foregoing. It was very remarkable on account of the suddenness of that conquest which Alexander made, and the greatness of the empire he set up, which much exceeded in extent all the foregoing.

This event is much spoken of in the prophecies of Daniel. This empire is represented by the third Kingdom of brass in Daniel's interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar's dream, Dan. ii. And in Daniel's vision of the four beasts, it is represented by the third beast that was like a leopard, that had on his back four wings of a fowl, to represent the swiftness of its conquest, chap. viii.; and is more particularly represented by the he-goat in the 8th chapter, that came from the west on the face of the whole earth, and touched not the ground, to represent how swiftly Alexander overran the world. The angel himself expressly interprets this he-goat to signify the king of Grecia, ver. 21. "The rough goat is the king of Grecia; and the great horn that is between his eyes is the first king." i. e. Alexander himself.

After Alexander had conquered the world, he soon died: and his dominion did not descend to his posterity, but four of his principal captains divided his empire between them. Now that being broken, and four stood up for it, four kingdoms stand up out of the nation, but not in his power; as in the 11th chapter of Daniel. The angel after foretelling the Persian empire, proceeds to foretell Alexander, ver. 3. "And a mighty king shall stand up, that shall rule with great dominion, and do according to his will." Then he foretells in the 4th verse, the dividing of his kingdom between his four captains: "And when he shall stand up, his kingdom shall be broken, and shall be divided toward the four winds of hea-

ven; and not to his posterity, nor according to his dominion which he ruled: for his kingdom shall be plucked up, even for others besides those." Of these four captains, one had Egypt and the neighbouring countries on the *south* of Judea; and another had Syria and the neighbouring countries *north* of Judea; and these two are called *the kings of the north and of the south.* (Dan. xi.)

Now this setting up of the Grecian empire did greatly prepare the way for Christ's coming, and for the erection of his kingdom. Besides the ways common to others in this period, there is one peculiar to this revolution, which remarkably promoted the work of redemption; and that was, that it made the Greek language common in the world. To have one common language understood and used through the greater part of the world, must greatly prepare the way for the setting up of Christ's kingdom. This gave advantage for spreading the gospel through all nations, with vastly greater ease, than if every nation had a distinct language, and did not understand each other. For though some of the first preachers of the gospel had the gift of tongues, so that they could preach in any language; yet all had not this particular gift: and they who had could not exercise it when they would, but only at special seasons, when the Spirit of God was pleased to inspire them in this way. And the churches in different and distant parts of the world, as at Jerusalem, Antioch, Galatia, Corinth, &c. could not have had that communication of which we have an account in the book of *Acts*, without a common language.—After the Grecian empire was set up, many in all these countries well understood the Greek language, which wonderfully opened the door for mutual communication between those churches which were so far separated from one another.

Again, making the Greek language common through so great a part of the world, did wonderfully make way for the kingdom of Christ, because it was the language in which the New Testament was to be originally written. The apostles propagated the gospel through many scores of nations; and if those nations could not have understood the Bible any otherwise than as it was translated into so many languages, it would have rendered the spreading of the gospel vastly more difficult. But by the Greek being made common to all, they all understood the New Testament of Jesus Christ in the language in which the apostles and evangelists originally wrote it. As soon as ever it was written by its original penmen, it immediately lay open to the world in a language that was commonly understood.

XV. The next thing I notice is the translating of the Old Testament into the Greek language, which was commonly

understood by the Gentiles. This is commonly called the Septuagint, or the translation of the seventy; and is supposed to have been made about fifty or sixty years after Alexander's conquests. This is the first translation that ever was made of the scriptures that we have any credible account of. The canon of the Old Testament had been completed by the prophet Malachi but about an hundred and twenty years before in its original. Hitherto the scriptures had remained locked up among the Jews in the Hebrew tongue, which was understood by no other nation; but now it was translated into a language that was commonly understood by the nations of the world.

This translation of the Old Testament is still extant, and is of great use. The Jews have many fables about the occasion and manner of this translation; but the truth of the case is supposed to be this, that multitudes of the Jews living in other parts of the world besides Judea, and being born and bred among the Greeks, the Greek became their common language. These not understanding the original Hebrew, they procured the scriptures to be translated for their use into the Greek language; and so henceforward the Jews, in all countries, except Judea, were wont in their synagogues to make use of this translation instead of the Hebrew.

This translation of the scriptures into a language so commonly understood through the world, greatly prepared the way for setting up Christ's kingdom in the world. For the apostles, commissioned to preach through the world, made great use of the scriptures of the Old Testament, and especially of the prophecies concerning Christ that were contained in them. By means of this translation, and by the Jews being scattered every where, they had the scriptures at hand in a language understood by the Gentiles. Hence they principally made use of this translation in their preaching and writings wherever they went. In all the numerous quotations out of the Old Testament in their writings, they are made almost every where in the very words of the Septuagint. The sense is the same as in the original Hebrew; though the words are different. But yet this makes it evident, that the apostles in their preaching and writings commonly made use of this translation. And this translation was principally used in Christian churches through most nations of the world, for several hundred years after Christ.

XVI. The next thing is the wonderful preservation of the church when it was eminently threatened and persecuted under the Grecian empire. The first time they were threatened was by Alexander himself. When besieging the city of Tyre, he sent to the Jews for assistance and supplies for his army.

Out of a conscientious regard to their oath to the king of Persia, they refused; but he being a man of a very furious spirit, agreeable to the scripture representation of the rough he-goat, marched against them with a design to cut them off. When he met the priests going out to him in their priestly garments, God wonderfully turned his heart to spare them, and favour them, as he did the heart of Esau when he met Jacob.

After this, one of the kings of Egypt, a successor of one of Alexander's four captains, entertained a design of destroying the nation of the Jews;* but was remarkably and wonderfully prevented by a stronger interposition of Heaven for their preservation.

But the most wonderful preservation of them all in this period was under the cruel persecution of Antiochus Epiphanes, king of Syria, and successor of another of Alexander's four captains. The Jews were at that time subject to the power of Antiochus; and he being enraged against them, long strove to his utmost utterly to destroy them, and root them out; at least all of them that would not forsake their religion, and worship his idols. He did indeed in a great measure waste the country, and depopulate the city of Jerusalem; and profaned the temple, by setting up his idols in some parts of it; and persecuted the people with insatiable cruelty; so that we have no account of any persecution like this before. Many of the particular circumstances of this persecution would be very affecting were there time to insist on them. This cruel persecution began about an hundred and seventy years

* On the death of Alexander the Great, Ptolemy Lagus assumed the regal title in Egypt. He was succeeded by Ptolemy Philadelphus, Evergetes, and Philopater. This last, no doubt, is the person to whom our Author here alludes. He was a cruel tyrant, revengeful, and debauched. Having been at Jerusalem, during his expedition to Syria, and having been denied an entrance into the Temple, he was greatly enraged against the whole body of the Jews. There were great numbers of them at Alexandria; these he degraded into slaves. The only condition by which a mark of disgrace with hot iron, and consequent slavery could be avoided, was to offer sacrifice to his gods. Out of many thousands, only three hundred yielded by base compliance. These being excommunicated by their brethren, roused Philopater into greater fury. He meditated nothing less than the utter ruin of the whole nation, beginning with those of Alexandria. He ordered them to be brought into the Hippodrome, an immense place without the city where the people usually assembled to see public races and diversions, and gave a peremptory injunction that five hundred elephants should be let loose upon them in that place. The first appointed day, the king, who was to have been present, overslept himself after a nocturnal debauch. The second passed by a similar disappointment. On the third day the king came to the Hippodrome, and the elephants were let loose upon the defenceless Jews.—But, by a wonderful providence, these animals turned upon the spectators and soldiers, and great numbers were killed by them. This, attended with some other circumstances of affright, induced the tyrant to desist from his cruel purpose.—W.

before Christ. It is spoken of in the prophecy of Daniel, Dan. viii. 9, 25 : xi. 31—38 ; and in the New Testament, Heb. xi. 36—38.

Antiochus intended not only to extirpate the Jewish religion, but, as far as in him lay, the very nation ; and particularly laboured to the utmost to destroy all copies of the law. And considering how weak they were, in comparison with a king of such vast dominion, the providence of God appears very wonderful in defeating his design. Many times the Jews seemed to be on the very brink of ruin, just ready to be wholly swallowed up ; and their enemies often thought themselves sure of obtaining their purpose. They once came against the people with a mighty army, with a design of killing all, except the women and children, and of selling these for slaves ; and so confident were they of obtaining their purpose, and others of purchasing, that above a thousand merchants came with the army, with money in their hands, to buy the slaves that should be sold. But God wonderfully stirred up and assisted one Judas, and others his successors, called the Maccabees, who, with a small handful in comparison, vanquished their enemies time after time, and delivered their nation. This also was foretold by Daniel, xi. 32. Speaking of Antiochus's persecution, he says, "And such as do wickedly against the covenant, shall be corrupt by flatteries : but the people that do know their God, shall be strong and do exploits."

God afterwards brought this Antiochus to a fearful, miserable end, by a loathsome disease, under dreadful torments of body and horrors of mind ; which was foretold, (Dan. xi. 45,) in these words, "Yet he shall come to his end, and none shall help him." After his death, there were attempts still to destroy the church ; but God baffled them all.

XVII. The next thing is the destruction of the Grecian, and setting up of the Roman empire. This was the fourth revolution in this period. And though it was brought to pass more gradually than the setting up of the Grecian empire, yet it far exceeded that, and was much the greatest and largest temporal monarchy that ever was in the world ; so that the Roman empire was commonly called *all the world ;* as in Luke ii. 1. "And there went out a decree from Cæsar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed :" *i. e.* all the Roman empire.

This empire is spoken of as much the strongest and greatest of any of the four : Dan. ii. 40. "And the fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron : for as much as iron breaketh in pieces, and subdueth all things : and as iron that breaketh all these, shall it break in pieces, and bruise." Dan. vii. 7, 19, 23. The time when the Romans first conquered and subdued the land of Judea, was between sixty and seventy years before Christ. Soon after this, the Roman empire was established in

its greatest extent; and the world continued subject to it henceforward till Christ came, and many hundred years after.

The nations being thus united under one monarchy when Christ came, and when the apostles went forth to preach the gospel, greatly prepared the way for the spreading of the gospel, and the setting up of Christ's kingdom in the world. For the world being thus subject to one government, it opened a general communication, and so opportunity was given for the more swift propagation of the gospel. Thus we find it in the British dominions, the communication is quick from one part to another. There are innumerable difficulties in travelling through different nations, that are under different independent governments, which there are not in travelling through different parts of the same realm, or different dominions of the same prince. So the world being under one government, that of the Romans, facilitated the apostle's travelling.

XVIII. About the same time learning and philosophy were risen to their greatest height in the Heathen world. Almost all the famous philosophers among the Heathen were after the captivity into Babylon. Almost all the wise men of Greece and Rome flourished in this time. What these philosophers in general chiefly professed as their business, was to inquire, wherein man's chief happiness lay, and how to obtain it. They seemed earnestly to busy themselves in this inquiry, and wrote multitudes of books about it, many of which are still extant; but they were exceedingly divided, there having been reckoned several hundreds of different opinions which they had concerning it. Thus they wearied themselves in vain, wandering in the dark, not having the glorious gospel to guide them. God was pleased to suffer men to do the utmost that they could do with human wisdom, and to try the utmost extent of their own understandings in order to find out the way to happiness, before the true light came to enlighten the world. God suffered these great philosophers to try what they could do for six hundred years together; and then it proved by the events of so long a time that all they could do was in vain; the world not becoming wiser, better, or happier under their instructions, but growing more and more foolish, wicked, and miserable. He suffered this, that it might be seen how far reason and philosophy could go in their highest ascent, that the necessity of a divine teacher might more convincingly appear. God was pleased to make foolish the wisdom of this world—to shew men the folly of their best wisdom—by the doctrines of his glorious gospel, which were above the reach of all their philosophy. See 1 Cor. i. 19—21.

After God had shewed the vanity of human learning, when set up in the room of the gospel, God was pleased to make it subservient to the purposes of Christ's kingdom, as a

handmaid to divine revelation. Thereby the vanity of human wisdom was shown, and the necessity of the gospel appeared; and hereby a handmaid was prepared to the gospel. An instance of this we have in the apostle Paul, who was famed for his much learning, (Acts xxvi. 24,) being skilled in the learning not only of the Jews, but also of the philosophers. This he improved to subserve the gospel; as he did in disputing with the philosophers at Athens, Acts xvii. 22, &c. By his learning he knew how to accommodate himself in his discourses to learned men, having read their writings; and he cites their own poets. Dionysius, a philosopher, was converted by him, and was made a great instrument of promoting the gospel. And there were many others in that and the following ages, who were eminently useful by their human learning in promoting the interests of Christ's kingdom.

XIX. Just before Christ was born, the Roman empire was raised to its greatest height, and also settled in peace. About four and twenty years before Christ, Augustus Cæsar, the first Roman emperor, began to rule as emperor of the world. Till then the Roman empire had of a long time been a commonwealth under the government of the senate, but then it became an absolute monarchy. This personage, as he was the first, so he was the greatest of all the Roman emperors; he reigned in the greatest glory. Thus the power of the Heathen world, which was Satan's visible kingdom, was raised to its greatest height, after it had been strengthening itself more and more from the days of Solomon, which was about a *thousand years.* Now the heathen world was in its greatest glory for strength, wealth, and learning.

God did two things to prepare the way for Christ's coming, wherein he took a contrary method from that which human wisdom would have taken. He brought his own visible people very low, and made them weak; but the Heathen, his enemies, he exalted to the greatest height, for the more glorious triumph of the cross of Christ. With a small number in their greatest weakness, he conquered his enemies in their greatest glory. Thus Christ triumphed over principalities and powers in his cross.

Augustus Cæsar had been for many years establishing his empire, and subduing his enemies, till the very year that Christ was born; when, all his enemies being subdued, his dominion over the world seemed to be gloriously settled. All was established in peace; in token whereof the Romans shut the temple of Janus, which was an established symbol among them of there being universal peace throughout the empire. And this universal peace, which was begun that very year in which Christ was born, lasted twelve years, even till the year that Christ disputed with the doctors in the temple.

Thus the world, after it had been, as it were, in a continual convulsion for so many hundred years together—like the four winds striving together on the tumultuous raging ocean, whence arose those four great monarchies—was now established in the greatest height of the fourth and last monarchy, and settled in quietness. Now all things are ready for the birth of Christ. This remarkable universal peace, after so many ages of tumult and war, was a fit prelude for ushering the glorious Prince of Peace into the world.

Thus I have gone through the first grand period of the whole space between the fall of man and the end of the world, viz. from the fall to the time of the incarnation of Christ; and have shown the truth of the first proposition, viz. That *from the fall of man to the incarnation of Christ*, God was doing those things which were preparatory to Christ's coming, and were forerunners of it.

PART VII.

Improvement of the First Period.

Before I proceed to the next period, I would make some few remarks by way of improvement upon what has been said under this.

I. From what has been said, we may strongly argue, that Jesus of Nazareth is indeed the Son of God, and the Saviour of the world; and so that the Christian religion is the true religion, seeing that Christ is the very person so evidently pointed at, in all the great dispensations of divine providence from the very fall of man, and was so undoubtedly in so many instances foretold from age to age, and shadowed forth in a vast variety of types and figures. If we seriously consider the course of things from the beginning, and observe the motions of all the great wheels of providence, we shall discern that they all tend hither. They are all as so many lines, whose course, if it be observed and accurately followed, will be found to centre here. It is so very plain in many things, that it would argue stupidity to deny it. This person, sent from God, came into the world with his commission and authority, to do his work, and to declare his mind. The Governor of the world, in all his great works towards Jews and Gentiles, down to the time of Christ's birth, has declared

it. It is a plain and evident truth, that he who was born at Bethlehem, who dwelt at Nazareth and Capernaum, and who was crucified without the gates of Jerusalem, must be the great Messiah. Blessed are all they that believe in and confess him, and miserable are all that deny him. This shows the unreasonableness of the Deists, who deny revealed religion; and of the Jews, who deny that this Jesus is the Messiah foretold and promised to their fathers.

Here should any object, That it may be, some cunning men contrived this history, and these prophecies, on purpose to prove that he is the Messiah. To such it may be replied, How could such a thing be contrived by cunning men to point to Jesus Christ, long before he ever was born? How could they know that any such person would be born? And how could their subtilty help them to foresee and point at an event that was to come to pass many ages afterwards? For no fact can be more evident, than that the Jews had those writings long before Christ was born; as they have them still in great veneration, in all their dispersions through the world. They would never have received such a contrivance from Christians, to prove Jesus to be the Messiah, whom they always denied; and much less would they have been made to believe that they always had those books in their hands, if they had been an imposition.

II. What has been said affords a strong argument for the divine authority of the books of the Old Testament, from that admirable harmony there is in them, whereby they all point to the same thing. For we may see by what has been said, how all the parts of the Old Testament, though written by so many different penmen, and in ages so distant, harmonize one with another. All agree in one, and centre in the same event; which it was impossible for any one of them to know, but by divine revelation.

Now, if the Old Testament was not inspired by God, what account can be given of such an agreement? for if these books were written without any divine direction, then none of these penmen knew that there would come such a person as Jesus Christ into the world; his coming was only a mere figment of their own brain: and if so, how happened it, that his figment of theirs came to pass? How came a vain imagination of theirs, which they foretold without any manner of ground for their prediction, to be exactly fulfilled? and especially how did they all come to agree in it, all pointing exactly to the same thing though many of them lived so many hundred years distant one from another?—This admirable consent and agreement in a future event, is therefore a clear and certain evidence of the divine authority of those writings.

III. Hence we may learn how weak and ignorant the ob-

jection is, against the Old Testament being the word of God, because it consists so much of warlike histories and civil transactions. Here, say some, we have histories of their kings and rulers, their wars with neighbouring nations, and the changes that happened in their state and government: but other nations used to keep histories of their public affairs, as well as they; why then should we think that these histories which the Jews kept are the word of God, more than those of other people? What has been said, shows the folly and vanity of such an objection. For hereby it appears, that the case of these histories is very different from that of all others. This history alone gives us an account of the first original of all things; and this alone deduces things down to us in a wonderful series from that original, giving an idea of the grand scheme of divine providence, as tending to its great end. And, together with the doctrines and prophecies contained in it, the same book gives a view of the whole series of the great events of divine providence, from the origin to the consummation of all things; exhibiting an excellent and glorious account of the wise and holy designs of the supreme governor in all. No common history has had such penmen. This history was all written by men who came with evident signs and testimonies of their being prophets of the most high God, immediately inspired—And though *histories*, yet containing those great events of providence by which it appears how God has been carrying on the glorious work of redemption from age to age, they are no less full of divine instruction, and those things that show forth Christ, and his glorious gospel, than the other parts of the holy scriptures.

To object against a book's being divine, merely because it is historical, is a poor fancy; as if that could not be the word of God which gives an account of what is past; or as though it were not reasonable to suppose, that God in a revelation he should give mankind, would give us any relation of the dispensations of his own providence. If so, it must be because his works are not worthy to be related: or because the scheme of his government, and the series of his dispensations towards his church, and the world he has made, is not worthy that any record should be kept of it.

The objection, that it is a common thing for nations and kingdoms to write histories and keep records of their wars, and the revolutions that come to pass in their territories, is so far from being a weighty objection against the historical part of scripture, as though it were not the word of God, that it is a strong argument in favour of it. For if the light of nature teaches all civilized nations to keep records of the events of *their* government and the series of their administrations, and to publish histories for the information of others, how much

more may we expect that God would give the world a record of the dispensations of *his* government, which doubtless is infinitely more worthy of a history for our information? If wise kings have taken care that there should be good histories written of the nations over which they have reigned, shall we think it incredible, that Jesus Christ should take care that his church, which is his nation, his peculiar people, should have in their hands a certain infallible history of their nation, and of his government of them?

If it had not been for the history of the Old Testament, how woefully should we have been left in the dark about many things which the church of God needs to know! How ignorant should we have been of God's dealings towards mankind, and towards his church, from the beginning! We should have been wholly in the dark about the creation of the world, the fall of man, the first rise and continued progress of the dispensations of grace towards fallen mankind! We should have known nothing how God at first set up a church in the world, and how it was preserved; after what manner he governed it from the beginning; how the light of the gospel first began to dawn in the world; how it increased, and how things were preparing for the coming of Christ.

If we are christians, we belong to that building of God that has been the subject of our discourse; but if it had not been for the history of the Old Testament, we should never have known what was the first occasion of God's going about this building, how the foundation of it was laid, and how it has gone on from the beginning. The times of the history of the Old Testament are mostly such as no other history includes; and therefore, if God had not taken care to give and preserve an account of these things for us, we should have been wholly without them.

Those that object against the authority of the Old Testament history, may as well object against Moses' account of the creation; for, in the former, we have a history of a work no less important, viz. the work of redemption. Yea, this is a far greater and more glorious work. If it be inquired which of the two works, that of creation, or that of providence, is greatest? it must be answered, the work of providence; but the work of redemption is the greatest of the works of providence.—And let those who make this objection consider what part of the Old Testament history can be spared, without making a great breach in that thread or series of events by which this glorious work has been carried on.—This leads me to observe,

IV. That, from what has been said, we may see much of the wisdom of God in the composition of the scriptures of the Old Testament, *i. e.* in the parts of which it consists. Let us

briefly take a view of the several parts of it, and of the need there was of them.

It was necessary, for instance, that we should have some account of the creation of the world, of our first parents, and their primitive state; of the fall, of the old world and its degeneracy; of the universal deluge, and the origin of nations after this destruction of mankind.

It seems necessary moreover, that there should be some account of the succession of the church of God from the beginning. God suffered all the world to degenerate, and took one nation only to be his people, to preserve the true worship and religion till the Saviour of the world should come. In them the world was gradually prepared for that great light, and those wonderful things of which he was to be the author. Thus they were a typical nation, that in them God might shadow forth and teach, as under a vail, all the future glories of the gospel. It was therefore necessary that we should have some account of this; how it was first effected by the call of Abraham, and by their being bond-slaves in Egypt, and how they were brought to Canaan. It was necessary that we should have some account of the revelation which God made of himself to that people, in giving their law, in the appointment of their typical worship, wherein the gospel is vailed, and of the formation of their civil and ecclesiastical state.

It seems exceeding necessary that we should have some account of their being actually brought to Canaan, the country promised them, and where they always dwelt; that we should have a history of the successions of the church of Israel, and of those providences towards them, which were most considerable and fullest of gospel mystery; that we should have some account of the promised external glory of that nation under David and Solomon, and a very particular account of David, whose history is so full of the gospel, and in whom began the race of their kings; and that we should have some account of the building of the temple, which was also full of gospel mystery.

And it is a matter of great consequence, that we should have some account of Israel's dividing from Judah, and of the ten tribes' captivity and utter rejection, and therefore a brief history of them till that time; that we should have an account of the succession of the kings of Juda, and of the church, till their captivity into Babylon; of their return from captivity, and resettlement in their own land, with the origin of the last state of the church before Christ came.

A little consideration will convince any one, that all these things were necessary, and that none of them could be spared; and in the general, that it was necessary we should have a history of God's church till such times as are within the reach

of human histories. It was of vast importance that we should have an inspired history of those times of the Jewish church, wherein there was kept up a more extraordinary intercourse between God and them, while he used to dwell among them as it were visibly, revealing himself by the Shechinah, by Urim and Thummim, and by prophecy, and so more immediately to order their affairs. And it was necessary that we should have some account of the great dispensations of God in prophecy, after the finishing of inspired history; for which it was needful that there should be a number of prophets raised who should foretell the coming of the Son of God, and the nature and glory of his kingdom, as so many harbingers to make way for him, and that their prophecies should remain in the church.

It was also a matter of great consequence that the church should have a book of divine songs given by inspiration from God, wherein there should be a lively representation of the true spirit of devotion, of faith, hope, and divine love, of joy, resignation, humility, obedience, repentance, &c. as in the Psalms; also that we should have from God such books of moral instructions as we have in Proverbs and Ecclesiastes, relating to the affairs and state of mankind, and the concerns of human life, containing rules of true wisdom and prudence for our conduct in all circumstances; and that we should have particularly a song representing the great love between Christ and his spouse the church, adapted to the disposition and holy affections of a true Christian soul towards Christ, and representing his grace and marvellous love to, and delight in his people, as in Solomon's Song. It is important that we should have a book to teach us how to conduct ourselves under affliction, seeing the church of God here is in a militant state, and God's people through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of heaven. The church is for a long time under trouble, meets with fiery trials, and extreme sufferings, before her time of peace and rest in the latter ages of the world. Therefore God has given us a book most proper in these circumstances, the book of Job; and though written on occasion of the afflictions of a particular saint, it was probably at first given to the church in Egypt under her afflictions there; and is made use of by the Apostle to comfort Christians under persecutions, James v. 11. "Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy." God was also pleased, in this book of Job, to give some view of the ancient divinity before the giving of the law.

Thus, from this brief review, I think it appears, that every part of the scriptures of the Old Testament is very use-

ful and necessary, and no part of it can be spared without loss to the church. And therefore the wisdom of God is conspicuous in ordering, that the scriptures of the Old Testament should consist of those very books of which they do consist.

Before I dismiss this particular, I would add, that it is very observable, that the history of the Old Testament is large and particular where the great affair of redemption required it; even where there was most done towards this work, most to typify Christ, and to prepare the way for him. Thus it is very particular in the history of Abraham and the other patriarchs; but very short in the account we have of the time which the children of Israel spent in Egypt. It is large in the account of the redemption out of Egypt, and the first settling of the affairs of the Jewish church and nation in the time of Moses and Joshua; but much shorter in the times of the Judges. So again, it is large and particular in the times of David and Solomon, and then very short in the history of the ensuing reigns. Thus the accounts are large or short, just as there is more or less of the affair of redemption to be seen in them.

V. From what has been said, we may see, that Christ and his redemption are the great subject of the whole Bible. Concerning the New Testament, the matter is plain; and by what has been said, it appears to be so also with respect to the Old Testament. Christ and his redemption is the great subject of the prophecies of the Old Testament, as has been shown. It has also been shown, that he is the great subject of the songs of the Old Testament; and the moral rules and precepts are all given in subordination to him. Christ and his redemption are also the great subject of the history of the Old Testament from the beginning all along; and even the history of the creation is brought in as an introduction to the history of redemption that immediately follows it. The whole book, both Old Testament and New, is filled up with the Gospel; only with this difference, that the Old Testament contains the gospel under a vail, but the New contains it unvailed, so that we may see the glory of the Lord with open face.

VI. By what has been said, we may see the usefulness and excellency of the Old Testament. Some are ready to look on the Old Testament as being out of date, and as if we, in these days of the gospel, have but little to do with it. But this is a very great mistake, arising from a want of observing the nature and design of the Old Testament, which, if it were observed, would appear full of the gospel of Christ, and would in an excellent manner illustrate and confirm the glorious doctrines and promises of the New Testament. Those parts of the Old Testament which are commonly looked upon

as containing the least divine instruction, are mines and treasures of gospel knowledge; and the reason why they are thought to contain so little is, because persons do but superficially read them. The treasures which are hid underneath are not observed. They only look on the top of the ground, and suddenly pass a judgment that there is nothing there. But they never dig into the mine: if they did, they would find it richly stored with what is more valuable than silver and gold, and would be abundantly requited for their pains.

What has been said, may show us what a precious treasure God has committed into our hands, in that he has given us the Bible. How little do most persons consider what a privilege they enjoy, in the possession of that holy book, the Bible, which they have in their hands, and may converse with as they please. What an excellent book is this, and how far exceeding all human writings! It reveals God to us, and gives us a view of the grand design and glorious scheme of providence from the beginning of the world, either in history or prophecy. It reveals the great Redeemer, his glorious redemption, and the various steps by which God accomplishes it from the first foundation to the top-stone! Shall we prize a history which gives us a clear account of some great earthly prince, or mighty warrior, as of an Alexander, a Cæsar, or a Marlborough? and shall we not prize the history that God gives us of the glorious kingdom of his Son Jesus Christ, the Prince and Saviour, and of the great transactions of that King of kings, and Lord of armies, the Lord mighty in battle; and what he has wrought for the redemption of his chosen people?

VII. What has been said may make us sensible how much most persons are to blame for their inattentive, unobservant way of reading the scriptures. How much profitable matter do the scriptures contain, if it were but observed! The Bible is the most comprehensive book in the world. But what will this signify to us, if we read it without observing what is the drift of the Holy Ghost in it? The Psalmist, (Psal. cxix. 18,) begs of God, "That he would enlighten his eyes that he might behold wondrous things out of his law." The scriptures are full of wondrous things. Those histories which are too commonly read as if they were only private concerns of particular persons, such as of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph; of Ruth, Joshua, the Judges, David, and the Israelitish princes, are accounts of vastly greater things, things of greater importance and more extensive concernment, than they who read them are commonly aware of.

The histories of scripture are but too commonly read, as if they were written only to entertain men's fancies, when the

infinitely great things contained in them are passed over without notice. Whatever treasures the scriptures contain, we shall be never the better for them if we do not observe them. He that has a Bible, and does not observe what it contains, is like a man who has a box full of silver and gold, and does not know it, nor observe that it is any thing more than a vessel filled with common stones. He will be never the better for his treasure, and so might as well be without it. He who has plenty of the choicest food stored up in his house, and does not know it, will never taste what he has, and will be as likely to starve as if his house were empty.

VIII. What has been said, may show us how great a person Jesus Christ is, and how great his errand into the world, seeing there was so much done to prepare the way for his coming. God had been preparing the way for him through all ages of the world from the very beginning. If we had notice of a certain stranger being about to come into a country, and should observe that a great preparation was made for him, great things were done, many alterations made in the state of the whole country, many hands employed, persons of great note engaged in making the preparation; and all the affairs and concerns of the country ordered so as to be subservient to the design of entertaining that person; it would be natural for us to think, surely, this is some extraordinary person, and it is some very great business that he is coming upon. How great a person then must he be, for whose coming the great God of heaven and earth, and governor of all things, spent four thousand years in preparing the way! Soon after the world was created, and from age to age, he has been doing great things, bringing mighty events to pass, accomplishing wonders without number, often overturning the world in order to it. He has been causing every thing in the state of mankind, and all revolutions and changes in the habitable world, from generation to generation, to be subservient to this great design.—Surely this must be some great and extraordinary person, and a great work indeed it must needs be, about which he is coming.

We read, (Matt. xxi. 8—10,) when Christ was coming into Jerusalem, and multitudes ran before him, having cut down branches of palm-trees, and strewed them in the way; and others spread their garments in the way, crying, *Hosanna, to the son of David*, that the whole city was moved, saying, Who is this? They wondered who that extraordinary person should be, that there should be such preparation made on occasion of his coming into the city. But if we consider, what great things were done in all ages to prepare the way for Christ's coming, and how the world was often overturned

to make way for it, much more may we cry out, Who is this? What great person is this? and say, (as in Psalm xxiv. 8, 10,) *Who is this king of glory*, that God should show such respect, and put such vast honour upon him? Surely this person is honourable in God's eyes, and greatly beloved of him; and surely it is a grand errand upon which he is sent.

PERIOD II.

FROM CHRIST'S INCARNATION TO HIS RESURRECTION.

HAVING shown how the work of redemption was carried on through the first period, from the fall of man to the incarnation of Christ, I come now to the second period, viz. the time of Christ's humiliation, or the space from his incarnation to his resurrection. And this is the most remarkable article of time that ever was or ever will be. Though it was but between thirty and forty years, yet more was done in it than had been done from the beginning of the world to that time. We have observed, that all which had been done from the fall to the incarnation of Christ, was only preparatory for what was now done. And it may also be observed, that all which was done before the beginning of time, in the eternal counsels between the persons of the blessed Trinity, chiefly respected this period. We therefore now proceed to consider the *second proposition*, viz.

That during the time of Christ's humiliation, from his incarnation to his resurrection, the purchase of redemption was made.

Though many things had been done in the affair of redemption, though millions of sacrifices had been offered; yet nothing was done to *purchase* redemption before Christ's incarnation. No part of the purchase was made, no part of the price was offered till now. But as soon as Christ was incarnate, the purchase began.—And the whole time of Christ's humiliation, till the morning that he rose from the dead, was taken up in this purchase. Then the purchase was entirely and completely finished. As nothing was done before Christ's incarnation, so nothing was done after his resurrection, to purchase redemption for men. Nor will there ever be any thing more

done to all eternity. That very moment when the human nature of Christ ceased to remain under the power of death, the utmost farthing was paid of the price of salvation for every one of the elect.

But for the more orderly and regular consideration of the great things done by our Redeemer to purchase redemption for us, I would speak of his becoming incarnate to capacitate himself for this purchase;—and of the purchase itself.

PART I.

Of Christ's Incarnation.

Christ became incarnate, or, which is the same thing, became man, to put himself in a capacity for working out our redemption. For though Christ, as God, was infinitely sufficient for the work, yet to his being in an immediate capacity for it, it was needful that he should not only be God, but man. If Christ had remained only in the divine nature, he would not have been in a capacity to have purchased our salvation; not from any imperfection of the divine nature, but by reason of its absolute and infinite perfection: for Christ, merely as God, was not capable either of that obedience or suffering that was needful. The divine nature is not capable of *suffering*; for it is infinitely above all suffering. Neither is it capable of *obedience* to that law which was given to man. It is as impossible that one who is only God, should obey the law that was given to man, as it is that he should suffer man's punishment.

And it was necessary not only that Christ should take upon him a *created* nature, but that he should take upon him *our* nature. It would not have sufficed for Christ to have become an *angel*, and to have obeyed and suffered in the angelic nature. But it was necessary that he should become a *man*, upon three accounts.

I. *It was needful in order to answer the law, that the very nature to which the law was given, should obey it.* Man's law could not be answered, but by being obeyed by man. God insisted upon it, that the law which he had given to man should be honoured, and fulfilled by the nature of man, otherwise the law could not be answered for men. The words, *Thou shalt not eat thereof, &c.* were spoken to the race of man-

kind, to the human nature; and therefore the human nature must fulfil them.

2. *It was needful to answer the law that the nature that sinned should die.* These words, "Thou shalt surely die," respect the human nature. The same nature to which the command was given, was that to which the threatening was directed.

3. *God saw meet, that the same world which was the stage of man's fall and ruin, should also be the stage of his redemption.* We read often of his coming into the world to save sinners, and of God's sending him into the world for this purpose.—It was needful that he should come into this sinful, miserable, undone world, in order to restore and save it. For man's recovery, it was needful that he should come down to man, to man's proper habitation, and that he should tabernacle with us: John i. 14. "The word was made flesh, and dwelt among us."

CONCERNING the incarnation of Christ, I would observe these following things.

I. The incarnation itself; in which especially two things are to be considered, viz.

1. His conception; which was in the womb of one of the race of mankind, whereby he became truly the Son of man, as he was often called. He was one of the posterity of Adam, a child of Abraham, and a son of David, according to God's promise. But his conception was—not in the way of ordinary generation, but—by the power of the Holy Ghost. Christ was formed in the womb of the Virgin, of the substance of her body, by the power of the Spirit of God. So that he was the immediate son of the woman, but not the immediate son of any male whatsoever; and so was the seed of the woman, and the son of a virgin, one that had never known man.

2. His birth.——Though the conception of Christ was supernatural, yet after he was conceived, his human nature was gradually perfected in the womb of the virgin, in a way of natural progress; and so his birth was in the way of nature. But his conception being supernatural, by the power of the Holy Ghost, he was both conceived and born without sin.

II. The second thing I would observe concerning the incarnation of Christ, is the fulness of the time in which it was accomplished. It was after things had been preparing for it from the very first fall of mankind, and when all things were ready. It came to pass at a time, which in infinite wisdom was the most fit and proper: Gal. iv. 4. "But when the fulness of time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law."

It was now the most proper time on every account. Any time before the flood would not have been so fit a time. For

then the mischief and ruin that the fall brought on mankind were not so fully seen. The curse did not so fully come on the earth before the flood, as it did afterwards: for though the ground was cursed in a great measure before, yet it pleased God that the curse should once, before the restoration by Christ, be executed in an universal destruction, even of the very form of the earth, that the dire effects of the fall might be seen before the recovery. Though mankind were mortal before the flood, yet their lives were almost a thousand years in length, a kind of immortality in comparison with what the life of man is now. It pleased God, that the curse, *Dust thou art, and unto dust thou shalt return*, should have its full accomplishment, and be executed in its greatest degree on mankind, before the Redeemer came to purchase a never-ending life.

It would not have been so fit a time for Christ to come, before Moses; for till then mankind were not so universally apostatized from the true God; they were not fallen universally into heathenish darkness; and so the need of Christ, the light of the world, was not so evident. The woful consequence of the fall with respect to man's mortality, was not so fully manifest till then; for man's life was not so shortened as to be reduced to the present standard, till about Moses' time.

It was most fit that the time of the Messiah's coming should not be till all nations, but the children of Israel, had lain long in heathenish darkness; that the remedilessness of their disease might by long experience be seen, and so the absolute necessity of the heavenly physician.

Another reason why Christ did not come soon after the flood probably was, that the earth might be full of people, that he might have the more extensive kingdom, that the effects of his light, power, and grace, might be glorified, and that his victory over Satan might be attended with the more glory in the multitude of his conquests. It was also needful that the coming of Christ should be many ages after Moses, that the church might be prepared by the Messiah's being long prefigured, foretold, and expected. It was not proper that Christ should come before the Babylonish captivity, because Satan's kingdom was not then come to its height. The heathen world before that consisted of lesser kingdoms. But God saw meet that the Messiah should come in the time of one of the four great monarchies. Nor was it proper that he should come in the time of the Babylonish, the Persian, or the Grecian monarchy. It was the will of God that his Son should make his appearance in the world in the time of the Roman, the greatest and strongest monarchy, which was Satan's visible kingdom in the world; that, by overcoming this, he might

visibly overcome Satan's kingdom in its greatest strength and glory, and so obtain the more complete triumph over Satan himself.

It was not proper that Christ should come before the Babylonish captivity. For, before that, we have not histories of the state of the Heathen world, to give us an idea of the need of a Saviour. Besides, learning did not much flourish, and so there had not been opportunity to show the insufficiency of human learning and wisdom to reform and save mankind. Again, the Jews were not dispersed over the world, as they were afterwards; and so things were not prepared in this respect for the coming of Christ. The necessity of abolishing the Jewish dispensation was not then so apparent as it was afterwards, by reason of the dispersion of the Jews; neither was the way prepared for the propagation of the gospel, as it was afterwards, by the same dispersion. Many other things might be mentioned, by which it would appear, that no other season before that very time in which Christ came, would have been proper for his appearing.

III. The next thing that I would observe concerning the incarnation of Christ, is the greatness of this event. Christ's incarnation was a greater and more wonderful thing than ever had yet come to pass. The creation of the world was a very great thing, but not so great as the incarnation of Christ. It was a great thing for God to make the creature, but not so great as for the Creator himself to become a creature. We have spoken of many great things that were accomplished between the fall of man and the incarnation of Christ: but God becoming man was greater than all. Then the greatest person was born that ever was or ever will be.

IV. Next observe, concerning the incarnation of Christ, the remarkable circumstances of it. He was born of a poor virgin; a pious holy person, but poor, as appeared by her offering at her purification: Luke ii. 24. "And to offer a sacrifice according to that which is said in the law of the Lord, A pair of turtle-doves, or two young pigeons." Which refers to Lev. v. 7. "And if she be not able to bring a lamb, then she shall bring two turtle-doves or two young pigeons." And this poor virgin was espoused to an husband who was but a poor man. Though they were both of the royal family of David, which was the most honourable, and Joseph was the rightful heir to the crown; yet the family was reduced to a very low state; which is represented by the tabernacle of David being fallen, Amos ix. 11. "In that day will I raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen, and close up the breaches thereof, and I will raise up his ruins, and I will build it as in the days of old."

He was born in the town of Bethlehem, as was foretold

(Mich. v. 2.) and there was a very remarkable providence of God to bring about the fulfilment of this prophecy, the taxing of all the world by Augustus Cæsar, (Luke ii.) He was born in a very low condition, even in a stable, and laid in a manger.

V. Observe the concomitants of this great event.—— And,

1. The return of the *Spirit;* which indeed began a little before, but yet was given on occasion of his birth. I have before observed how the spirit of prophecy ceased, not long after Malachi. From about the same time visions and immediate revelations ceased also. But on this occasion, they are granted anew, and the Spirit in these operations returns again. The first revealed instance of its restoration is the vision of Zacharias, the father of John the Baptist, (Luke i.) The next is the vision which the Virgin Mary had, (*ibid.*) The third is the vision which Joseph had, (Matt. i.) In the next place, the Spirit was given to Elizabeth, (Luke i. 41.) Next, it was given to Mary, as appears by her song, (Luke i. 46, &c.) Then to Zacharias again, (*ibid.* verse 64.) Then it was sent to the shepherds, (Luke ii. 9.) Then it was given to Simeon, (Luke ii. 25.) Then to Anna, (ver. 36.) Then to the wise men in the east. Then to Joseph again, directing him to flee into Egypt; and after that directing his return.

2. The next concomitant of Christ's incarnation is, the great notice that was taken of it in heaven, and on earth. How it was noticed by the glorious inhabitants of the heavenly world, appears by their joyful songs on this occasion, heard by the shepherds in the night. This was the greatest event of providence that ever the angels had beheld. We read of their singing praises when they saw the formation of this lower world: Job xxxviii. 7. "When the morning stars sang together and all the sons of God shouted for joy." And so they do, on this much greater occasion, the birth of the Son of God, who is the creator of the world.

The glorious angels had all along expected this event. They had taken great notice of the prophecies and promises of these things: for we are told, that they desire to look into the affairs of redemption, 1 Pet. i. 12. They had been the ministers of Christ in this affair of redemption, in all the several steps of it from the very fall of man; as in God's dealings with Abraham, with Jacob, and with the Israelites. And doubtless they had long joyfully expected the coming of Christ; but now they see it accomplished, and therefore greatly rejoice, and sing praises on this occasion.

Notice was taken of it by Elizabeth and the Virgin Mary before the birth of Christ; not to say by John the Baptist before he was born, when he leaped in his mother's womb as

it were for joy, at the voice of the salutation of Mary. Elizabeth and Mary most joyfully praise God together, with Christ and his forerunner in their wombs, and the Holy Spirit in their souls. And afterwards what joyful notice is taken of this event by the shepherds, and by those holy persons Zacharias, and Simeon, and Anna! How do they praise God on the occasion! Thus the inhabitants of heaven, and the church on earth, unite in their joy and praise on this occasion.

Great part of the universe takes joyful notice of the incarnation of Christ. Heaven takes notice of it, and the inhabitants sing for joy. This lower world of mankind, both Jews and Gentiles, take notice of it. It pleased God to put honour on his Son, by wonderfully stirring up some of the wisest of the Gentiles to come a long journey to see and worship him at his birth. They were led by a miraculous star, signifying the birth of that glorious person who is the bright and morning-star, going before, and leading them to the very place where the young child was. Some think they were instructed by the prophecy of Balaam, who dwelt in the eastern parts, and who foretold Christ's coming as a star that should rise out of Jacob. Or they might be instructed by that general expectation there was of the Messiah's coming about that time, from the prophecies the Jews had of him in their dispersions in all parts of the world.

3. The next concomitant of the birth of Christ was his circumcision. But this may more properly be spoken of under another head, and so I will not insist upon it now.

4. The next concomitant was his first coming into the second temple, when an infant, on occasion of the purification of the blessed Virgin. We read, Hagg. ii. 7. "The desire of all nations shall come, and I will fill this house (or temple) with glory." And in Mal. iii. 1. "The Lord whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant." And now was the first instance of the fulfilment of these prophecies.

5. The last concomitant I shall mention is the sceptre's departing from Judah, in the death of Herod the Great. The sceptre had never totally departed from Judah till now. Judah's sceptre was greatly diminished in the revolt of the ten tribes in Jeroboam's time; and the sceptre departed from Israel or Ephraim at the time of the captivity of the ten tribes by Shalmaneser. But it remained in the tribe of Judah, under the kings of the house of David. And when the tribes of Judah and Benjamin were carried captive by Nebuchadnezzar, the sceptre of Judah ceased for a little while, till the return from the captivity under Cyrus: and then, though they were not an independent government, as they had been before, but owed fealty to the kings of Persia; yet their governor was of themselves, who had the power of life and death, and they were

governed by their own laws; and so Judah had a lawgiver from between his feet during the Persian and Grecian monarchies. Towards the latter part of the Grecian monarchy, the people were governed by kings of their own, of the race of the Maccabees, for near a hundred years; and after that they were subdued by the Romans. But yet the Romans suffered them to be governed by their own laws, and to have a king of their own, Herod the Great, who reigned about forty years, and governed with proper kingly authority, only paying homage to the Romans. But presently after Christ was born he died, as we have an account, (Matt. ii. 19.) and Archelaus succeeded him; but was soon put down by the Roman Emperor; and then the sceptre departed from Judah. There were no more temporal kings of Judah after that, neither had that people their governors from the midst of themselves, but were ruled by a Roman governor sent among them; and they ceased to have the power of life and death among themselves. Hence the Jews say to Pilate, "It is not lawful for us to put any man to death," John xviii. 31. Thus the sceptre departed from Judah when Shiloh came.

PART II.

The purchase of Redemption.

Having thus considered Christ's coming into the world, and his taking on him our nature, to put himself in a capacity for the purchase of redemption, I come now to show what is intended by the *purchase* of redemption—to make some general *observations* concerning those things by which this purchase was made—and then to consider those things more particularly which Christ did and suffered, by which that purchase was made.

SECT. I.

The purchase itself, what?

By Christ purchasing redemption, two things are intended, his *satisfaction*, and his *merit*. All is done by the price that Christ lays down, which does two things: it pays our debt, and so it *satisfies;* it procures our title to happiness, and so it

merits. The *satisfaction* of Christ is to free us from *misery*, and the *merit* of Christ is to purchase *happiness* for us.

The word *purchase*, in this connection, is taken either more strictly or more largely. It is oftentimes used more strictly, to signify only the merit of Christ; and sometimes more largely, to signify both his satisfaction and merit. Indeed most of the words used in this affair have various significations. Thus sometimes divines use *merit* for the whole price that Christ offered, both satisfactorily, and positively meritorious. And so the word *satisfaction* is sometimes used, not only for his propitiation, but also for his meritorious obedience. For in some sense, not only suffering the penalty, but positively obeying, is needful to satisfy the law. The reason of this various use of these terms seems to be, that satisfaction and merit do not differ so much really as relatively. They both consist in paying a valuable price, a price of infinite value: but only that price as it respects a debt to be paid, is called *satisfaction;* and as it respects a positive good to be obtained, is called *merit.* The difference between paying a debt and making a positive purchase, is more relative than essential. He who lays down a price to pay a debt, does in some sense make a purchase; he purchases liberty from the obligation. And he who lays down a price to purchase a good, does as it were make satisfaction: he satisfies the conditional demands of him to whom he pays it. This may suffice concerning what is meant by the purchase of Christ.

SECT. II.

Some general Observations concerning those things by which this Purchase was made.

1. And here observe, That whatever in Christ had the nature of *satisfaction*, was by virtue of the *suffering* or humiliation that was in it; but whatever had the nature of *merit*, was by virtue of the *obedience* or righteousness there was in it. The satisfaction of Christ consists in his answering the demands of the law on man, which were *consequent* on the breach of the law. These were answered by *suffering* the penalty of the law. The merit of Christ consists in what he did to answer the demands, which were *prior* to man's breach of the law, or to fulfil what the law demanded before man sinned, which was *obedience.*

The satisfaction or propitiation of Christ consists either in his *suffering* evil, or his being subject to *abasement.* Christ did not only make satisfaction by proper suffering, but by whatever had the nature of humiliation, and abasement of

circumstances. Thus he made satisfaction by continuing under the power of death, while he lay buried in the grave; though neither his body nor soul properly endured any suffering after he was dead. Whatever Christ was subject to that was the judicial fruit of sin, had the nature of satisfaction for sin. But not only proper suffering, but all abasement and depression of the state and circumstances of mankind below its primitive honour and dignity, such as his body remaining under death, his body and soul remaining separate, &c. are the judicial fruits of sin. And all that Christ did in his state of humiliation, that had the nature of obedience, moral virtue, or goodness, had the nature of merit in it, and was part of the price with which he purchased happiness for the elect.

2. Both Christ's satisfaction for sin, and also his meriting happiness by his righteousness, were carried on through the *whole time* of his humiliation. Christ's satisfaction for sin was not by his last sufferings only, though it was principally by them; but all his sufferings, and all his humiliation, from the first moment of his incarnation to his resurrection, were propitiatory or satisfactory. Christ's satisfaction was chiefly by his death, because his sufferings and humiliation in that was greatest. But all his other sufferings, and all his other humiliation, all along had the nature of satisfaction: the mean circumstances in which he was born: his being born of a poor virgin, in a stable, and laid in a manger; his taking the human nature upon him in its low estate, and under those infirmities brought upon it by the fall; his being born in the form of sinful flesh, &c. And so all his sufferings in his infancy and childhood, and all that labour, contempt, reproach, temptation, and difficulty of any kind which he suffered through the whole course of his life, was of a propitiatory and satisfactory nature.—And so his purchase of happiness by his righteousness was also carried on through the whole time of his humiliation till his resurrection: not only in that obedience he performed through the course of his life, but also in the obedience he performed in laying down his life.

3. It was by the *same things* that Christ hath satisfied God's justice, and also purchased eternal happiness. He did not make satisfaction by some things, and then work out righteousness by other different things; but in the *same acts* by which he wrought out righteousness, he also made satisfaction, but only taken in a different relation. One and the same act of Christ, considered with respect to the obedience there was in it, was part of his righteousness, and purchased heaven: but considered with respect to the self denial, and difficulty, and humiliation, with which he performed it, had the nature of satisfaction for sin. and procured our pardon. Thus his

going about doing good, preaching the gospel, and teaching his disciples, was a part of his righteousness, and the purchase of heaven, as it was done in obedience to the Father; and the same was a part of his satisfaction, as he did it with great labour, trouble, and weariness, and under great temptations, exposing himself hereby to reproach and contempt. So his laying down his life had the nature of satisfaction to God's offended justice, considered as his bearing punishment in our stead: but considered as an act of obedience to God, who had given him this command, that he should lay down his life for sinners, it was a part of his righteousness and purchase, and as much the principal part of his righteousness as it was the principal part of his satisfaction. And to instance in his circumcision, what he suffered in it, had the nature of satisfaction: the blood that was shed therein was propitiatory blood; but as it was a conformity to the law of Moses, it was part of his meritorious righteousness. Though it was not properly the act of human nature, he being an infant; yet the human nature being the subject of it, and being the act of his *person*, it was accepted as an act of his obedience, as our mediator.—And even his being born in such a low condition, has the nature of satisfaction by reason of the humiliation that was in it; and of righteousness, as it was the act of his *person* in obedience to the Father, what the will of the human nature did acquiesce in, though there was no act of the will of the human nature prior to it.—These things may suffice to have been observed in general, concerning the purchase Christ made of redemption.

SECT. III.

Those things in particular by which the Purchase was made.—Christ's Obedience and Righteousness.

I NOW proceed to consider the things that passed during the time of Christ's humiliation, and first, with respect to his *obedience and righteousness.* And this is subject to a threefold distribution. I shall therefore consider his obedience with respect to the *laws* which he obeyed—the *different stages of his life* in which he performed it—and the *virtues he exercised* in his obedience.

I. THE first distribution of the acts of Christ's righteousness is with respect to *the laws which he obeyed.* But here it must be observed in general, that all the precepts which Christ obeyed may be reduced to one law, and that is what the apostle

calls *the law of works*, Rom. iii. 27. Every command that Christ obeyed may be reduced to that great and everlasting law of God that is contained in the covenant of works, that eternal rule of right which God had established between himself and mankind. Christ came into the world to fulfil and answer the covenant of works, that is, the covenant that is to stand for ever as a rule of judgment. The covenant that we had broken, was the covenant that must be fulfilled.

This law of works indeed includes all the laws of God that ever have been given to mankind; for it is a general rule of the law of works, and indeed of the law of nature, That God is to be obeyed, and that he must be submitted to in whatever positive precept he is pleased to give. It is a rule of the law of works, That men should obey their *earthly* parents: and it is certainly as much a rule of the same law, That we should obey our *heavenly* Father; and so the law of works requires obedience to all the positive commands of God. It required Adam's obedience to that positive command, Not to eat of the forbidden fruit; and it required obedience of the Jews to all the positive commands of their institution. When God commanded Jonah to arise and go to Nineveh, the law of works required him to obey: and so it required Christ's obedience to all the positive commands which God gave him.

But, more particularly, *the commands of God which Christ obeyed*, were of three kinds; they were such as he was subject to, either merely *as man*, or *as he was a Jew*, or purely *as Mediator*.

1. He obeyed those commands which he was subject to merely as *man*. These were the commands of the moral law, which was the same with that which was given at Mount Sinai, written in two tables of stone, which are obligatory on mankind of all nations and all ages of the world.

2. He obeyed all those laws he was subject to as he was *a Jew*. Thus he was subject to the ceremonial law, and was conformed to it. He was conformed to it in his being circumcised the eighth day; and he strictly obeyed it in going up to Jerusalem to the temple three times a year; at least after he was come to the age of twelve years, which sems to have been the age when the males began to go up to the temple. And so Christ constantly attended the service of the temple, and of the synagogues.

To this head of his obedience may be reduced his submission to John's baptism. For it was a special command to the Jews, to go forth to John the Baptist, and be baptized of him; and therefore Christ, being a Jew, was subject to this command: and therefore, when he came to be baptized of John, and John objected, that he had more need to come to

him to be baptized of him, he gives this reason for it, That it was needful that he should do it, *that he might fulfil all righteousness.* (See Matt. iii. 13—15.)

3. Christ was subject to *the mediatorial law;* or that which related purely to his mediatorial office. Such were the commands which the Father gave him to teach such doctrines, to preach the gospel, to work such miracles, to call such disciples, to appoint such ordinances, and finally to lay down his life: for he did all these things in obedience to the commands he had received of the Father, as he often tells us. (John x. 18. xiv. 31.) These commands he was not subject to merely as man; for they did not belong to other men: nor yet was he subject to them as a Jew; for they were no part of the Mosaic law: but they were commands he had received of the Father, that purely respected his mediatorial office.

Christ's righteousness, by which he merited heaven for himself, and all who believe in him, consists principally in his obedience to this mediatorial law: for in fulfilling this law consisted his chief work and business in the world. The history of the evangelists is chiefly taken up in giving an account of his obedience to this law. This part of his obedience was attended with the greatest difficulty; and therefore his obedience in it was most meritorious. What Christ had to do in the world by virtue of his being Mediator, was infinitely more difficult than what he had to do merely as a man or as a Jew. To his obedience to this mediatorial law belongs his going through his last sufferings, beginning with his agony in the garden, and ending with his resurrection.

As the obedience of the first Adam, wherein his righteousness would have consisted, if he had stood, would have mainly consisted in his obedience to that special law to which he was subject as moral head and surety of mankind, even the command of abstaining from the tree of knowledge of good and evil; so the obedience of the second Adam, wherein his righteousness consists, lies mainly in his obedience to that special law to which he was subject as mediator and surety for man.

Before I proceed to the next distribution of Christ's righteousness, I would observe three things concerning his obedience to these laws.

1. He performed that obedience to them which was in every respect *perfect.* It was perfect with respect to the *work* commanded; and the *principle* from which he obeyed. It was perfect with respect to the *ends* he acted for; he never had any by-ends, but aimed perfectly at such as the law of God required. It was perfect with respect to the *manner* of perfor-

mance; every circumstance of each act was perfectly conformed to the command. It was perfect with respect to the *degree* of the performance: he acted wholly up to the rule.—It was perfect with respect to the *constancy* of obedience, without any interruption; and with respect to *perseverance*. He held out in perfect obedience to the very end, in all the changes he passed through, and all the trials that were before him.

The meritoriousness of Christ's obedience, depends on the perfection of it. If it had failed in any instance, it could not have been meritorious; for imperfect obedience is not accepted as any obedience at all in the sight of the law of works, to which Christ was subject. That is not accepted as obedience to a law that does not fully answer it.

2. Christ's obedience was performed through the greatest trials and temptations that ever any obedience was. His obedience was attended with the greatest difficulties, and most extreme abasement; which was another thing that rendered it more meritorious and thank-worthy. To obey another when his commands are easy, is not so worthy, as it is to obey when it cannot be done without great difficulty.

3. He performed this obedience with infinite *respect* to God, and the honour of his law. The obedience he performed was with infinitely greater love to God, and regard to his authority, than that of angels. The angels perform their obedience with a sinless perfection of love; but Christ performed his with infinite love. Though the human nature of Christ was not capable of love absolutely infinite, yet Christ's obedience in that nature, is the obedience of his person, as God-man; and therefore there was infinite love manifest in that obedience. And this, together with the infinite dignity of the person who obeyed, rendered his obedience infinitely meritorious.

II. The second distribution of the acts of Christ's obedience, is with respect to *the different parts of his life*, wherein they were performed. And in this respect they may be divided into those which were performed in private life, and those which were performed in his public ministry.

1st, Those acts he performed during his *private life*.—He was perfectly obedient in his childhood. He infinitely differed from other children, who as soon as they begin to act, begin to sin and rebel. He was subject to his earthly parents, though he was Lord of all, Luke ii. 51; and was found about his Father's business even when a child, Luke ii. 42.—He then began to fulfil the mediatorial law, which the Father had given him. He continued his private life for about thirty years, dwelling at Nazareth, in the house of his reputed father Joseph, where he served God in a private

capacity, and in following a mechanical trade, the business of a carpenter.

2dly, Those acts which he performed during his *public ministry*, which began when he was about thirty years of age, and continued for the three last years and a half of his life.—Most of the evangelic history is taken up in giving an account of what passed during that time. Indeed all the history of Matthew, except the two first chapters; the whole of Mark; all the gospel of John; and all of Luke, except the two first chapters; excepting also what we find in the evangelists concerning the ministry of John the Baptist. Christ's first appearing in his public ministry, is what is often called his *coming* in scripture. Thus John speaks of Christ's coming as future, though he had been born long before.

Concerning the public ministry of Christ, I would observe the following things.

1. The *forerunner* of Christ's coming in his public ministry was John the Baptist. He came preaching repentance for the remission of sins, to make way for Christ's coming, agreeable to the prophecies of him, Isa. xl. 3—5. and Matt. iv. 5, 6. It is supposed that John the Baptist began his ministry about three years and a half before Christ; so that John's ministry and Christ's put together, made seven years, which was the last of Daniel's weeks; and this time is intended in Dan. ix. 27. "He will confirm the covenant with many for one week." Christ came in the midst of this week of years, as Daniel foretold: "And in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease."

John the Baptist's ministry consisted principally in preaching the law, to awaken and convince men of sin, to prepare them for the coming of Christ, and to comfort them, as the law is to prepare the heart for the entertainment of the gospel. A very remarkable outpouring of the spirit of God attended John's ministry; and the effect of it was, that Jerusalem, and all Judea, and all the region round about Jordan, were awakened and convinced. They went out to him, and submitted to his baptism, confessing their sins. John was the greatest of all the prophets who came before Christ, Matt. xi. 11. "Among those that are born of women, there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist;" *i. e.* he had the most honourable office. He was as the morning-star, which is the harbinger of the approaching day, and forerunner of the rising sun. The other prophets were stars that gave light in the night; but those stars went out on the approach of the gospel-day. Now the coming of Christ being very nigh, the morning star comes before him, the brightest of all the stars, as John the Baptist was, in the sense mentioned, the greatest of all the prophets. And when Christ came in his public ministry, the light of

that morning-star decreased too; as we see, when the sun rises, it diminishes the light of the morning-star. So John the Baptist says of himself, John iii. 30. "He must increase, but I must decrease." And soon after Christ began his public ministry, John the Baptist was put to death; as the morning-star is visible a little while after the sun is risen, yet soon goes out.

2. Christ's entrance on his public ministry was by *baptism*, followed with the *temptation* in the wilderness. His baptism was as it were his solemn inauguration, by which he entered on his ministry; and was attended with his being anointed with the Holy Ghost, in a solemn and visible manner, the Holy Ghost descending upon him symbolically, in a visible shape, like a dove, attended with a voice from heaven, saying, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased," Matt. iii. 16, 17. After this he was led by the devil into the wilderness. Satan made a violent attack upon him at his first entrance on his work; and now he had a remarkable trial of his obedience; but he got the victory. He who had such success with the first Adam, had none with the second.

3. I would take notice of the *work* in which Christ was employed during his ministry. And here are *three* things chiefly to be noticed, viz. his preaching, his working of miracles, and his calling and appointing disciples and ministers of his kingdom.

(1.) His *preaching* the gospel. Great part of the work of his public ministry consisted in this; and much of that obedience by which he purchased salvation for us, was in his speaking those things which the Father commanded him. He more clearly and abundantly revealed the mind and will of God than ever it had been revealed before. He came from the bosom of the Father, perfectly knew his mind, and was in the best capacity to reveal it. As the sun, as soon as it is risen, begins to shine; so Christ, as soon as he came into his public ministry, began to enlighten the world with his doctrine. As the law was given at Mount Sinai, so Christ delivered his evangelical doctrine, (full of blessings, and not curses,) to a multitude on a mountain, Matt. v.—vii.

When he preached, he did not teach as the scribes, but as one having authority; so that his hearers were astonished at his doctrine. He did not reveal the mind and will of God in the style of the prophets, as "Thus saith the Lord;" but in such a style as this, "I say unto you," "Verily, verily, I say unto you." He delivered his doctrines, not only as the doctrines of God the Father, but as his own doctrines. He gave forth commands, not (as the prophets were wont to do,) as God's commands, but as his own. He spake

in such a style as this, "This is *my commandment*," John xv. 12. "Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I *command* you," *ibid*, 14.

(2.) Another thing that Christ was employed in during the course of his ministry, was *working miracles*. Concerning which we may observe,—Their *multitude*. Besides particular instances, we often have an account of multitudes coming at once with diseases, and his healing them. They were *works of mercy*. In them was displayed not only his infinite power and greatness, but his infinite mercy and goodness. He went about doing good, healing the sick, restoring sight to the blind, hearing to the deaf, and the proper use of their limbs to the lame and halt; feeding the hungry, cleansing the leprous, and raising the dead.

They were almost all of them *such as had been spoken of as the peculiar works of God*, in the Old Testament. So with respect to stilling the sea, Psalm cvii. 29. "He maketh the storm a calm, so that the waves thereof are still;" walking on the sea in a storm, Job ix. 8. "Which alone—treadeth upon the waves of the sea;" and casting out devils, Psalm lxxiv. 14. "Thou brakest the heads of leviathan in pieces." So as to feeding a multitude in a wilderness: Deut. viii. 16. "Who fed thee in the wilderness with manna;" telling man's thoughts, Amos iv. 13. "Lo, he that declareth unto man what is his thought—the Lord, the God of hosts is his name;" and raising the dead, Psalm lxviii. 20. "Unto God the Lord belong the issues from death." So as to opening the eyes of the blind, Psalm cxlvi. 8. "The Lord openeth the eyes of the blind;" healing the sick, Psalm ciii. 3. "Who healeth all thy diseases;" and lifting up those who are bowed together, Psalm cxlvi. 8. "The Lord raiseth them that are bowed down."

They were in general such works as were *images of the great work which he came to work on man's heart;* representing that inward, spiritual cleansing, healing, renovation, and resurrection, of which all his redeemed are the subjects.—*He wrought them by his own power, and not as the other prophets did.* They were wont to work all their miracles in the name of the Lord; but Christ wrought in his own name. Moses was forbidden to enter into Canaan, because he seemed by his speech to assume to himself the honour of working only one miracle. Nor did Christ work miracles as the *apostles* did; but by his own authority and will: Thus, saith he, "I will; be thou clean," Matt. viii. 3. And in the same strain he put the question, "Believe ye that I am able to do this?" Matt. ix. 28.

(3.) Another thing that Christ did in the course of his ministry, was to *call his disciples*. He called many disciples, whom he employed as ministers. He sent seventy at one time in this work: but there were twelve that he set apart as

apostles, who were the grand ministers of his kingdom, and as it were the twelve foundations of his church. (See Rev. xxi. 14.)—These were the main instruments of setting up his kingdom in the world, and therefore shall sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

4. I would observe how he *finished* his ministry. And this was, in giving his dying *counsels* to his disciples, and all that should be his disciples, which we have recorded particularly in the 14th, 15th, and 16th chapters of John's Gospel. In instituting a solemn *memorial* of his death, the sacrament of the Lord's supper, wherein we have a representation of his body broken, and of his blood shed. In *offering* up himself a *sacrifice* to God, in his last sufferings. This act he did as God's minister, as God's anointed priest; and it was the greatest act of his public ministry, the greatest act of his obedience, by which he purchased heaven for believers. The priests of old used to do many other things as God's ministers: but the highest execution of their office was their actually offering sacrifice on the altar. So the greatest thing that Christ did in the execution of his priestly office, and the greatest thing that he ever did, and the greatest thing that ever was done, was the offering up himself a sacrifice to God. Herein he was the antitype of all that had been done by all the priests, in all their sacrifices and offerings, from the beginning of the world.

III. The third distribution of the acts by which Christ purchased redemption, regards *the virtues that he exercised and manifested* in them. Christ, in doing his work for our redemption, exercised every possible virtue and grace. Indeed, there are some particular virtues that sinful man may have, which were not in Christ; not from any defect of virtue, but because his virtue was perfect, and without defect. Such is the virtue of repentance, brokenness of heart for sin, mortification, and denying of lust. Christ had no sin of his own to repent of, nor any lust to deny. But all virtues which do not presuppose sin, were in him in a higher degree than in any mere creature. Every virtue in him was perfect. Virtue itself was greater in him than in any other; and it was under greater advantages to shine in him than in any other. Strict virtue shines most when most tried; but never any virtue had such trials as Christ's had.

The virtues that Christ exercised in his work may be divided into three sorts, *viz.* the virtues which more immediately respect *God*, those which immediately respected *himself*, and those which immediately respect *men*.

1. Those *virtues which more immediately respect God.* There appeared in him a holy *fear* and *reverence* towards God

the Father. Christ had a greater trial of his virtue in this respect than any other had, from the honourableness of his person. This was the temptation of the angels that fell to cast off their worship of God and reverence of his majesty, that they were beings of such exalted dignity themselves. But Christ was infinitely more worthy and honourable than they; for he was the eternal son of God, and his person was equal to the person of the Father; and yet, as he had taken on him the office of mediator, and the nature of man, he was full of reverence towards God. He manifested a wonderful *love* towards God. The angels give great testimonies of their love towards God, in their constancy and agility in doing his will; and many saints have given great testimonies of their love, who, from love to God, endured great labours and sufferings; but none ever gave such testimonies of love to God as Christ has given. He manifested the most wonderful *submission* to the will of God. Never was any one's submission so tried as his was. And he manifested the most wonderful spirit of *obedience* that ever was manifested.

2. In this work he most wonderfully manifested those *virtues which more immediately respected himself;* as humility, patience, and contempt of the world. Christ, though he was the most excellent and honourable, yet was the most *humble;* yea, he was the most humble of all creatures. No angel or man ever equalled him in humility, though he was the highest in dignity and honourableness. Christ would have been under the greatest temptations to pride, if it had been possible for any thing to be a temptation to him. The temptation of the angels that fell was the dignity of their nature, and the honourableness of their circumstances; but Christ was infinitely more honourable than they. The human nature of Christ was so honoured as to be in the same person with the eternal Son of God, who was equal with God; and yet that human nature was not at all lifted up with pride. Nor was the man Christ Jesus at all lifted up with pride, with all those wonderful works which he wrought, of healing the sick, curing the blind, lame, and maimed, and raising the dead. And though he knew that God had appointed him to be the king over heaven and earth, angels and men, as he says, Matt. xi. 27, "All things are delivered unto me of my Father;" though he knew he was such an infinitely honourable person, and thought it not robbery to be equal with God; and though he knew he was the heir of the Father's kingdom: yet, such was his humility, that he did not disdain to be abased and depressed down into lower and viler circumstances and sufferings than ever any other elect creature was; so that he became least of all, and lowest of all. The proper trial and evidence of humility is, stooping or complying with those acts or circumstances, when called to it,

which are very low, and contain great abasement. But none ever stooped so low as Christ, if we consider either the infinite height that he stooped from, or the great depth to which he stooped. Such was his humility, that though he knew his infinite worthiness of honor, and of being honoured ten thousand times as much as the highest prince on earth, or angel in heaven, yet he did not think it too much when called to it, to be bound as a malefactor, to become the laughing-stock of the vilest of men, to be crowned with thorns, to have a mock robe put upon him, and to be crucified like a slave and malefactor, as one of the meanest and worst of vagabonds and miscreants, and an accursed enemy of God and men, who was not fit to live. And this was not for himself, but for some of the meanest and vilest of creatures, even some of those accursed wretches that crucified him. Was not this a wonderful manifestation of humility, when he cheerfully and most freely submitted to this abasement?—And how did his *patience* shine forth under all the terrible sufferings which he endured; when he was dumb, and opened not his mouth, but went as a lamb to the slaughter! And what *contempt* of the glory of this world was there, when he rather chose this meanness and suffering, than to be invested with the external glories of an earthly prince, as the multitude often solicited him!

3. Christ, in a wonderful manner, exercised those *virtues which more immediately respect other men.* And these may be summed up under two heads, viz. meekness and love.

Christ's *meekness* was his humble calmness of spirit under the provocations that he met with. The greatness of provocation lies in two things, viz. in the degree of opposition by which the provocation is given; and, secondly, in the degree of the unreasonableness of that opposition, or in its being very causeless, and without reason, and the great degree of obligation to the contrary. Now, if we consider both these things, no man ever met with such provocations as Christ did, when he was upon earth. How much he was hated, what abuses he suffered from the vilest of men; how great his sufferings, and how spiteful and contemptuous they were in offering him those abuses! How causeless and unreasonable were these abuses, how undeserving he was of them, yea, how much deserving of the contrary, viz. of love, and honour, and good treatment at their hands. If we consider these things, no man ever met with a thousandth part of the provocation that Christ met with from men; and yet how meek was he under all! how composed and quiet his spirit! how far from being in a ruffle and tumult! When he was reviled, he reviled not again: and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth. No appearance was there of a revengeful spirit; on the contrary, what a spirit of forgiveness did he exhibit! so that he

fervently and effectually prayed for their forgiveness, when they were in the highest act of provocation that ever they perpetrated, *viz.* nailing him to the cross: Luke xxiii. 34. "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do."

And never did there appear such an instance of *love* to men. Christ's love to men, especially in going through his last sufferings, and offering up his life and soul under those sufferings, which was his greatest act of love, was far beyond all parallel. There have been very remarkable manifestations of love in some of the saints, as in the apostle Paul, the apostle John, and others; but the love to men that Christ shewed when on earth, as much exceeded the love of all other men, as the ocean exceeds a small stream.

And it is to be observed, that all the virtues which appeared in Christ shone brightest in the close of his life, under the trials he met with then. Eminent virtue always shows brightest in the fire. Pure gold shows its purity chiefly in the furnace. It was chiefly under those trials which Christ underwent in the close of his life, that his love to God, his honour of God's majesty, his regard to the honour of his law, his spirit of obedience, his humility, contempt of the world, his patience, meekness, and spirit of forgiveness towards men, appeared. Indeed, every thing that Christ did to work out redemption for us appears mainly in the close of his life. Here mainly is his satisfaction for sin, and here chiefly is his merit of eternal life for sinners, and here chiefly appears the brightness of his example, which he hath set us for imitation. Thus we have taken a brief view of the thing whereby the purchase of redemption was made with respect to his *righteousness* that appeared in them.

SECT. IV.

Christ's Sufferings and Humiliation.

Among those things in particular by which the purchase was made, we must reckon the sufferings and humiliation to which Christ was subject, whence arose the satisfaction he made for sin.

I. He was subject to uncommon humiliation and suffering in his *infancy*. His mother not only suffered in bearing him, but when her travail came upon her, it is said, *there was no room in the inn*, Luke ii. 7. She was forced to betake herself to a stable, where Christ was born. And we may conclude, that his mother's circumstances in other respects were proportionably strait and difficult, and that she was destitute of the conveniences necessary for so young an infant which others

were wont to have. Besides, he was persecuted in his infancy. They began to seek his life as soon as he was born. Herod, the chief man of the land, was so engaged to kill him, that, in order to it, he killed all the children in Bethlehem, and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under. And Christ suffered banishment in his infancy, was driven out of his native country into Egypt, and without doubt suffered much by being carried so long a journey, when he was so young, into a strange country.

II. Christ was subject to great humiliation in his *private* life at Nazareth. He there led a servile, obscure life, in a mean, laborious occupation; for he is called not only the *carpenter's son*, but the *carpenter:* Mark vi. 3. "Is not this the carpenter, the brother of James and Joses, and Juda, and Simon?" By hard labour, he earned his bread before he ate it, and so suffered that curse which God pronounced on Adam, Gen. iii. 13. "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread." Let us consider how great a degree of humiliation the glorious Son of God, the creator of heaven and earth, was subject to in this, that for about thirty years he should live a private, obscure life among labouring men, and all this while be overlooked, not taken notice of in the world, more than other common labourers. Christ's humiliation, in some respects, was greater in private life than in the time of his public ministry. There were many manifestations of his glory in the word he preached, and the miracles he wrought: but the first thirty years of his life he spent among ordinary men, as it were in silence. There was not any thing to make him to be taken notice of more than any ordinary mechanic, only the spotless purity and eminent holiness of his life; and that was in a great measure hid in obscurity, so that he was little taken notice of till after his baptism.

III. Christ was the subject of great humiliation and suffering during his *public* life, from his baptism till the night wherein he was betrayed.

1. He suffered great *poverty*, so that he had not *where to lay his head*, (Matth. viii. 20, compared with John xviii. 1, 2, and Luke xxi. 27, and chap. xxii. 30.) So that what was spoken of Christ in Cant. v. 2, "My head is filled with dew, and my locks with the drops of the night," was literally fulfilled. And through his poverty he doubtless was often tried with hunger, thirst, and cold, Matt. iv. 2; xxi. 18. His mother and natural relations were poor, not able to help him; and he was maintained by the charity of some of his disciples while he lived. So we read in Luke viii. at the beginning, of certain women that followed him, and ministered unto him of their substance. He was so poor, that he was not able to pay the demanded tribute without a miracle. See Matt. xvii. 27.

And when he ate his last passover, it was not at his own charge, but that of another, as appears by Luke xxii. 7, &c. And from his poverty he had no grave of his own to be buried in. It was the manner of the Jews, unless they were poor, to prepare themselves a sepulchre while they lived. But Christ had no land of his own, though he was possessor of heaven and earth; and therefore was buried by Joseph of Arimathea's charity, and in his tomb, which he had prepared for himself.

2. He suffered great hatred and *reproach*. He was despised and rejected of men; one of little account, slighted for his low parentage, and his mean city Nazareth. He was reproached as a glutton and drunkard, a friend of publicans and sinners; was called a deceiver of the people; sometimes was called a madman, and a Samaritan, and one possessed with a devil, (John vii. 20, viii. 48, and x. 20.) He was called a blasphemer, and was accounted by many a wizzard, or one that wrought miracles by the black art, and by communication with Beelzebub. They excommunicated him, and agreed to excommunicate any man that should own him, (John ix. 22.) They wished him dead, and were continually seeking to murder him; sometimes by force and sometimes by craft. They often took up stones to stone him, and once led him to the brow of a hill, intending to throw him down the precipice, to dash him in pieces against the rocks.

He was thus hated and reproached by his own visible people, John i. 11. "He came to his own, and his own received him not." And he was principally despised and hated by those who were in chief repute, and were their greatest men. Indeed the hatred was general. Into whatever part of the land he went, he met with hatred and contempt; in Capernaum, and Jericho; in Jerusalem, which was the holy city, even when he went to the temple to worship; also in Nazareth, his own city, among his own relations, and his old neighbours.

3. He suffered the buffetings of Satan in an uncommon manner. One time in particular, he had a long conflict with the devil, when he was in the wilderness forty days, with wild beasts and devils; and was so exposed to the devil's power, that he was carried about by him from place to place, while he was otherwise in a very suffering state.—So much for the humiliation and suffering of Christ's public life, from his baptism to the night wherein he was betrayed.

IV. I come now to his last humiliation and sufferings, from the evening of the night wherein he was betrayed, to his resurrection. And here was his greatest humiliation and suffering, by which principally he made satisfaction to the justice of God for the sins of men. First, his life was sold by one of his own disciples for thirty pieces of silver; which was the price of the life of a servant, Exod. xxi. 32. Then he

was in dreadful agony in the garden. There came such a dismal gloom upon his soul, that he began to be sorrowful and very heavy, and said, that his *soul was exceeding sorrowful, even unto death, and was sore amazed.* So violent was the agony of his soul, as to force the blood through the pores of his skin; so that while his soul was overwhelmed with amazing sorrow, his body was clotted with blood. The disciples, who used to be as his friends and family, at this time, above all, appeared cold towards him, and unconcerned for him, at the same time that his father's face was hid from him. Judas, to whom Christ had been so very merciful, and who was treated as one of his family or familiar friends, comes and betrays him in the most deceitful, treacherous manner. The officers and soldiers apprehend and bind him; his disciples forsake him and flee; his own best friends do not stand by him to comfort him in this time of his distress. He is led away as a malefactor to appear before the priests and scribes, his venomous mortal enemies, that they might sit as his judges. Now they had got him into their hands, they sat up all night, to have the pleasure of insulting him. But because they aimed at nothing short of his life, they set themselves to find some colour to put him to death, and seek for witnesses against him. When none appeared, they set some to bear false witness; and when their witness did not agree together, they examined him, in hope to catch something out of his own mouth. They hoped he would say, that he was the Son of God, and then they thought they should have enough. But because they see they are not like to obtain this, they adjure him, in the name of God, to say whether he was or not; and when he confessed that he was, then it was a time of rejoicing with them, which they show, by spitting in his face, blindfolding him, and striking him in the face with the palms of their hands, and then bidding him prophecy who it was that struck him; thus ridiculing him for pretending to be a prophet. And the very servants have a hand in the sport, Mark xiv. 65. "And the servants did strike him with the palms of their hands."

During the sufferings of the night, Peter, one of the chief of his own disciples, instead of standing by to comfort, appears ashamed to own him, and denies and renounces him with oaths and curses. And after the chief priests and elders had finished the night in so shamefully abusing him, in the morning (the morning of the most wonderful day that ever was,) they led him away to Pilate, to be condemned to death by him, because they had not the power of life and death in their own hands. He is brought before Pilate's judgment-seat, and there the priests and elders accuse him as a traitor. And when Pilate, upon examining into the matter, declared he found no fault in him, the Jews were but the more fierce and violent to have

him condemned. Upon which Pilate, after clearing him, very unjustly brings him upon a second trial; and then not finding any thing against him, acquits him again. Pilate treats him as a poor worthless fellow; but is ashamed, on so little pretence, to condemn him as a traitor.

And then he was sent to Herod, to be tried by him, and was brought before his judgment-seat; his enemies followed, and virulently accused him before Herod. Herod does not condemn him as a traitor, or one that would set up for a king, but looks upon him as Pilate did, as a poor worthless creature, not worthy to be noticed, and makes a mere laugh of the Jews accusing him as dangerous to Cæsar, as one setting up to be a king against him; and therefore, in derision, dresses him up in a mock robe, makes sport of him, and sends him back through the streets of Jerusalem to Pilate, with the mock robe on.

Then the Jews prefer Barabbas before him, and are instant and violent with loud vociferations to Pilate, to crucify him. So Pilate, after he had cleared him twice, and Herod once, very unrighteously brings him on trial the third time, to try if he could not find something sufficient to crucify him. Christ was stripped and scourged; thus he gave his back to the smiters. After that, though Pilate still declared that he found no fault in him, yet, so unjust was he, that, for fear of the Jews, he delivered Christ to be crucified. But before they execute the sentence, his spiteful and cruel enemies take the pleasure of mocking him again; they get round him, and make a set business of it. They stripped him, put on him a scarlet robe, a reed in his hand, and a crown of thorns on his head. Both Jews and Roman soldiers were united in the transaction; they bow the knee before him, and in derision cry, "Hail, king of the Jews." They spit upon him also, take the reed out of his hand, and smite him on the head. After this they led him away to crucify him, made him carry his own cross, till he sunk under it, his strength being spent; and then they laid it on one Simon, a Cyrenian.

At length, being come to Mount Calvary, they execute the sentence which Pilate had so unrighteously pronounced. They nail him to his cross by his hands and feet, then raise it erect, and fix one end in the ground, he being still suspended on it by the nails which pierced his hands and feet. Now Christ's sufferings are come to the extremity: now the cup, which he so earnestly prayed might pass from him, is come; he must, he does drink it. In those days crucifixion was the most tormenting kind of death by which any were wont to be executed. There was no death wherein the person experienced so much of mere torment; and hence the Roman word, which signifies *torment*, is taken from this kind of death.——Besides what our Lord endured in this excruciating corporeal death,

he endured vastly more in his soul. Now was that travail of his soul, of which we read in the prophet; now it pleased God to bruise him, and to put him to grief; now he poured out his soul unto death, as in Isa. liii. And if the mere forethought of this cup made him sweat blood, how much more dreadful and excruciating must the drinking of it have been! Many martyrs have endured much in their bodies, while their souls have been joyful, and have sung for joy, whereby they have been supported under the sufferings of their outward man, and have triumphed over them. But this was not the case with Christ; he had no such support; but his sufferings were chiefly those of the mind, though the other were extremely great. In his crucifixion Christ did not sweat blood, as he had done before; not because his agony was now not so great, but his blood had vent another way. But though he did not sweat blood, yet such was the sufferings of his soul, that probably it rent his vitals; when his side was pierced, there came forth blood and water. And so here was a kind of literal fulfilment of that in Psal. xxii. 14. "I am poured out like water:—my heart is like wax, it is melted in the midst of my bowels."

Now, under all these sufferings, the Jews still mock him; and, wagging their heads, say, *Thou that destroyest the temple and buildest it in three days, save thyself: if thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross.* And even the chief priests scribes, and elders, joined in the cry, saying, *He saved others, himself he cannot save.* And probably the devil at the same time tormented him to the utmost of his power; and hence it is said, Luke xxii. 53. "This is your hour, and the power of darkness."

Under these sufferings, Christ, having cried out once and again with a loud voice, at last said, IT IS FINISHED, (John xix. 30.) *and bowed the head, and gave up the ghost.* And thus was finished the greatest and most wonderful thing that ever was done. Now the angels beheld the most wonderful sight that ever they saw. Now was accomplished the main thing that had been pointed at by the various institutions of the ceremonial law, by all the typical dispensations, and by all the sacrifices from the beginning of the world.

Christ being thus brought under the power of death, continued under it till the morning of next day but one. Then was finished that great work, the purchase of our redemption, for which such great preparation had been made from the beginning of the world. Then was finished all that was required in order to satisfy the threatenings of the law, and all that was necessary in order to satisfy divine justice; then the utmost that vindictive justice demanded, even the whole debt, was paid. Then was finished the whole of the purchase of eternal life. And now there is no need of any thing more

to be done towards a purchase of salvation for sinners; nor has ever any thing been done since, nor will any thing more be done for ever and ever.

PART III.

Improvement of the Second Period.

In surveying the history of redemption, we have now shown how this work was carried on through the two former of the three main periods into which this whole space of time was divided, *viz.* from the fall to the incarnation of Christ, and from thence to the end of the time of Christ's humiliation. In the first of these periods we have particularly explained how God prepared the way for Christ's appearing and purchasing redemption; and in the second period, how that purchase was made and finished. I would now make some *improvement* of what has been said on both these subjects considered conjunctly.

SECT. I.

An Use of Reproof.

I begin with an use of reproof; a reproof of unbelief, of self-righteousness, and of a careless neglect of the salvation of Christ.

I. How greatly do these things reprove those who do not believe in, but reject the Lord Jesus Christ! *i. e.* all those who do not heartily receive him. Persons may receive him in profession outwardly, and may wish that they had some of those benefits that Christ has purchased, and yet their hearts not receive him. They may be hearty in nothing that they do towards Christ; they may have no high esteem of, nor any sincere respect to Christ; they may never have opened the door of their heart to him, but have kept him shut out all their days, ever since his salvation has been offered to them. Though their hearts have been opened to others, their doors flung wide open to them, with free admittance at all times; though they have been embraced, and the thrones of their hearts have been allowed them; yet Christ has always been shut out and they have been deaf to all his calls. They never could find an inclination of heart to receive him, nor would they ever trust in him.

Let me now call upon such to consider, how great is their sin, in thus rejecting Jesus Christ. You slight the glorious person, for whose coming God made such great preparation in such a series of wonderful providences from the beginning of the world, and whom, after all things were made ready, God sent into the world, bringing to pass a thing before unknown, *viz.* the union of the divine nature with the human in one person. You have been guilty of slighting that great Saviour, who, after such preparation, actually accomplished the purchase of redemption; and who, after he had spent three or four and thirty years in poverty, labour, and contempt, in purchasing redemption, at last finished the purchase by closing his life under such extreme sufferings as you have heard; and so by his death, and continuing for a time under the power of death, completed the whole. This is the person you reject and despise. You make light of all the glory of his person, and of all the glorious love of God the Father, in sending him into the world, and all his wonderful love appearing in the whole of this affair. That precious stone which God hath laid in Zion for a foundation in such a manner, and by such wonderful works as you have heard, is a stone set at nought by you.

Sinners sometimes are ready to wonder why unbelief should be looked upon as a great sin; but if you consider what you have heard, how can you wonder? If this Saviour is so great, and this work so great, and such great things have been done in order to it, truly there is no cause of wonder that the rejection of this Saviour is so provoking to God. It brings greater guilt than the sins of the worst of heathens, who never heard of those things, nor have had this Saviour offered to them.

II. What has been said, affords matter of reproof to those who, instead of believing in Christ, trust in themselves for salvation. Is it not a common thing with men to take it upon themselves to do that great work which Christ came into the world to do? to trust in their prayers, their good conversations, the pains they take in religion, the reformation of their lives, and their self-denial, in order to recommend them to God, to make some atonement for their past sins. Let such consider three things:

1. How *great* a thing that is which you take upon you. It is to do the work of the great Saviour of the world.—Though you are poor, worthless, vile, and polluted, yet you arrogantly take upon you that very work for which the only-begotten Son of God became man; and in order to which God employed four thousand years in all the great dispensations of his providences, aiming chiefly to make way for Christ's coming to do this work. This is the work that you

foolishly think yourself sufficient for; as though your prayers and other performances were excellent enough for this purpose. Consider how vain is the thought which you entertain of yourself. How must such arrogance appear in the sight of Christ, whom it cost so much. It was not to be obtained even by him, so great and glorious a person, at a cheaper rate than his going through a sea of blood, and passing through the midst of the furnace of God's wrath. And how vain must your arrogance appear in the sight of God, when he sees you imagining yourself sufficient, and your worthless, polluted performances excellent enough for the accomplishing of that work of his own Son, to prepare the way for which he was employed in ordering all the great affairs of the world for so many ages!

2. If there be ground for you to trust, as you do, in your own righteousness, then all that Christ did to purchase salvation, and all that God did from the fall of man to prepare the way for it, is *in vain*. Your self-righteousness charges God with the greatest folly, as though he has done all things in vain, to bring about an accomplishment of what you alone, with your poor polluted prayers, and the little pains you take in religion, are sufficient to accomplish for yourself. For if you can appease God's anger, and commend yourself to him by these means, then you have no need of Christ; Gal. ii. 21. "If righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain."

If you can do this by your prayers and good works, Christ might have spared his pains; he might have spared his blood; he might have kept within the bosom of his Father, without coming down into this evil world, to be despised, reproached, and persecuted to death. God needed not have busied himself, as he did for four thousand years, causing so many changes in the state of the world all that while, in order to bring about that which you can accomplish in a few days, only with the trouble of a few religious performances. Consider, what greater folly could you have devised to charge upon God than this, that all those things were done so needlessly; when, instead of all this, he might only have called you forth, and committed the business to you, which you think you can do so easily. Alas! how blind are natural men! and especially how vain are the thoughts which they have of themselves! How ignorant of their own littleness and pollution! What great things do they assume to themselves!

3. You that trust to your own righteousness, arrogate to yourselves the honour of the *greatest* thing that ever God himself did. You seem not only sufficient to perform *divine* works, but such is your pride and vanity, that you are not content without taking upon you to do the very *greatest* work that ever God himself wrought. You see by what has been

said, how God has subordinated all his other works to this of redemption. God's works of providence are greater than those of creation; and all his works of providence, from the beginning of the generations of men, were in order to make way for the purchasing of redemption. To take on yourself to work out redemption, is a greater thing than if you had taken it upon you to create a world. What a figure you would make, if you should seriously go about to create a world; or, decking yourself with majesty, should pretend to speak the word of power, and call an universe out of nothing, intending to go on in order, and say, "Let there be light; let there be a firmament," &c. But then consider, that in attempting to work out redemption for yourself, you attempt a *greater* thing than this, and are *serious* in it, and will not be dissuaded from it. You strive in it, are full of the thought that you are sufficient for it, and big with hopes of accomplishing it.

You take upon you to do the very greatest and *most difficult* part of this work, viz. to purchase redemption. Christ can accomplish other parts of this work without cost; but this part cost him his life, as well as innumerable pains and labours. Yet this is that part which self-righteous persons go about to accomplish for themselves. If all the angels in heaven had been sufficient for this work, would God have set himself to effect such things as he did in order to it? and would he ever have sent his own Son, the creator of the angels, into the world, to have done and suffered such things?

What self-righteous persons take to themselves, is the same work that Christ was engaged in when he was in his agony and bloody sweat, and when he died on the cross, which was the greatest thing that ever the eyes of angels beheld. Great as it is, they imagine they can do the same that Christ accomplished by it. Their self-righteousness does in effect charge Christ's offering up himself in these sufferings, as the greatest instance of folly that ever men or angels saw, instead of being the most glorious display of the divine wisdom and grace. Yea, self-righteousness makes all that Christ did through the whole course of his life, all that he said and suffered, and his incarnation itself, and not only so, but all that God had been doing in the great dispensations of his providence from the beginning of the world to that time, as nothing but a scene of the most wild, extreme, and transcendent folly.

Is it any wonder, then, that a self-righteous spirit is so represented in scripture, and spoken of, as that which is most fatal to the souls of men? And is it any wonder, that Christ is represented in scripture as being so provoked with the Pharisees and others, who trusted in themselves that they were

righteous, and were proud of their goodness, and thought that their own performances were a valuable price of God's favour and love?

Let persons hence be warned against a self-righteous spirit. You that are seeking salvation, and taking pains in religion, take heed to yourselves that you do not trust in what you do. Harbour no such thoughts, that God now, seeing how much you are reformed, how you are sometimes affected, will be pacified towards you, and will not be so angry for your former sins; that you shall gain on him by such things, and draw his heart to show you mercy. If you entertain the thought, that God is *obliged* to do it, and does not act justly if he refuse to regard your prayers and pains; if you quarrel with God, and complain of him for not doing it, this shows what your opinion is of your own righteousness, viz. that it is a valuable price of salvation, and ought to be accepted of God as such. Such complaining of God, and quarreling with him, for not taking more notice of your righteousness, plainly shows that you are guilty of arrogance, thinking yourself sufficient to offer the price of your own salvation.

III. What has been said on this subject, affords matter of reproof to those who carelessly *neglect* the salvation of Christ. These live a senseless kind of life, neglect the business of religion and their own souls, not taking any course to get an interest in Christ, or what he has done and suffered, or any part in that glorious salvation he has purchased. They have their minds taken up about the gains of the world, or the vanities and pleasures of youth, and make light of what they hear of Christ's salvation, to that degree, that they do not at present so much as seek after it. Let me here apply myself to you in some expostulatory interrogations.

1. Shall so many prophets, and kings, and righteous men, have their minds so much taken up with the prospect, that the purchase of salvation was to be wrought out in ages long after their death; and will you neglect it when actually accomplished? You have heard what great account the church in all ages made of the future redemption of Christ; how joyfully they expected it, how they spoke of it, how they studied and searched into these things, how they sung joyful songs, and had their hearts greatly engaged about it, though they did not expect that it would be accomplished till many ages after their death, 1 Pet. i. 10—12. How much did Isaiah and Daniel, and other prophets, speak concerning this redemption! And how much were their hearts engaged, and their attention and study fixed upon it! How was David's mind taken up in this subject! He declared that it was all his salvation, and all his desire; 2 Sam. xxiii. 5. How did he employ his voice and harp in celebrating it, and the glorious

display of divine grace therein exhibited! and all this, although they beheld it not as yet accomplished, but saw that it was to be brought to pass so long a time after their day.—— And before this, how did Abraham and the other patriarchs rejoice in the prospect of Christ's day, and the redemption which he was to purchase! And even the saints before the flood were affected and elated in the expectation of this glorious event, though it was then so long future, and it was so very faintly and obscurely revealed to them.

Now these things are declared to you as actually fulfilled. The church now has seen accomplished all those great things which they so joyfully prophesied of; and you are abundantly shown how those things were accomplished: Matt. xiii. 17. "Verily I say unto you, that many prophets and righteous men have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them." And yet, when these things are thus abundantly set before you as already accomplished, how light do you make of them! How unconcerned are you about them, following other things, and not so much as feeling any interest in them! Indeed your sin is extremely aggravated in the sight of God. God has put you under great advantages for your eternal salvation, far greater than those saints of old enjoyed. He has put you under a more glorious dispensation; has given you a more clear revelation of Christ and his salvation; and yet you neglect all these advantages, and go on in a careless course of life, as though nothing had been done, no such proposals and offers had been made you.

2. Have the angels been so engaged about this salvation which is by Christ ever since the fall of man, though they are not immediately concerned in it, and will you, who need it, and have it offered to you, be so careless about it? You have heard how the angels at first were subjected to Christ as mediator, and how they have all along been ministering spirits to him in this affair. In all the great dispensations which you have heard of from the beginning of the world, they have been active and as a flame of fire in this affair, being most diligently employed as ministering spirits to minister to Christ in this great affair of man's redemption. And when Christ came, how engaged were their minds! They came to Zacharias, to inform him of the coming of Christ's forerunner.—They came to the Virgin Mary, to inform her of the approaching birth of Christ. They came to Joseph, to warn him of the danger which threatened the new-born Saviour, and to point out to him the means of safety. And how were their minds engaged at the time of the birth of Christ! The whole multitude of the heavenly hosts sang praises upon the occasion, saying, *Glory to God in the highest, on earth peace, good*

will towards men. And afterwards, from time to time, they ministered to Christ when on earth; at the time of his temptation, of his agony in the garden, at his resurrection, and at his ascension. All these things show, that they were greatly engaged in this affair; and the scripture informs us, that they pry into these things: 1 Pet. i. 12. "Which things the angels desire to look into." And how are they represented in the Revelation as being employed in heaven in singing praises to him that sitteth on the throne, and to the Lamb! Now, shall these take so much notice of this redemption, and of the purchaser, who need it not for themselves, and have no immediate concern or interest in it, or offer of it; and will you to whom it is offered, and who are in such extreme necessity of it, neglect and take no notice of it?

3. Did Christ labour so hard, and suffer so much to procure this salvation, and is it not worth the while for you to be at some labour in seeking it? Did our salvation lie with such weight on the mind of Christ, as to induce him to become man, to suffer even death itself, in order to procure it? And is it not worth the while for you, who need this salvation, and must perish eternally without it, to take earnest pains to obtain an interest in it after it is procured, and all things are ready?

4. Shall the great God be so concerned about this salvation, as often to overturn the world to make way for it; and when all is done, is it not worth your seeking after? What great, what wonderful things has he done: removing and setting up kings, raising up a great number of prophets, separating a distinct people from the rest of the world, overturning nations and kingdoms, and often the state of the world; and so has continued bringing about one change and revolution after another for forty centuries in succession, to make way for the procuring of this salvation! And when at the close of these ages the great Saviour comes, passing through a long series of reproach and suffering, and then suffering all the waves and billows of God's wrath for men's sins, insomuch that they overwhelmed his soul; after all these things done to procure salvation for sinners, is it not worthy of your being so much concerned about it, but that it should be thrown by, and made nothing of, in comparison of worldly gain, gay clothing, or youthful diversions, and other such trifling things?

O! that you who live negligent of this salvation, would consider what you do! What you have heard from this subject, may show you what reason there is in that exclamation of the apostle, Heb. ii. 3. "How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?" and in Acts xiii. 41. "Behold, ye despisers, and wonder, and perish; for I work a work in your days, a work which you shall in no wise believe, though a man declare

it unto you." God looks on you as great enemies of the cross of Christ, as adversaries and despisers of all the glory of this great work. And if God has made such account of the glory of salvation as to destroy many nations in order to prepare the way for the glory of his Son in this affair; how little account will he make of the lives and souls of ten thousand such opposers and despisers as you, who continue impenitent, when your welfare stands in the way of that glory? Why surely you shall be dashed to pieces as a potter's vessel, and trodden down as the mire of the streets. God may, through wonderful patience, bear with hardened careless sinners for awhile; but he will not long bear with such despisers of his dear Son, and his great salvation, the glory of which he has had so much at heart, before he will utterly consume without remedy or mercy.

SECT. II.

An Use of Encouragement.

I WILL conclude with a second use of encouragement to burdened souls to put their trust in Christ for salvation. To all such as are not careless and negligent, but make seeking an interest in Christ their main business, being sensible in some measure of their necessity, and afraid of the wrath to come; to such, what has been said on this subject holds forth great matter of encouragement, to venture their souls on the Lord Jesus Christ. And as motives proper to excite you so to do, let me lead you to consider two things in particular.

1. The *completeness* of the purchase which has been made. You have heard that this work of purchasing salvation was wholly finished during the time of Christ's humiliation. When Christ rose from the dead, and was exalted from that abasement to which he submitted for our salvation, the purchase of eternal life was completely made, so that there was no need of any thing more to be done in order to it. But now the servants were sent forth with a message, Matt. xxii. 4. "Behold, I have prepared my dinner: my oxen and my fatlings are killed, and all things are ready: come unto the marriage." Therefore, are your sins many and great? Here is enough done by Christ to procure their pardon. There is no need of any righteousness of yours to obtain your pardon and justification; no, you may come freely, without money and without price. Since therefore there is such a free and gracious invitation given you, come, come naked as you are; come as a poor condemned criminal; come and cast yourself down at Christ's feet, as one justly condemned, and utterly helpless. Here is a

complete salvation wrought out by Christ, and through him offered to you. Come, therefore, accept of it, and be saved.

2. For Christ to reject one that thus comes to him, would be to frustrate all those great things which God brought to pass from the fall of man to the incarnation of Christ. It would also frustrate all that Christ did and suffered while on earth; yea, it would frustrate the incarnation itself. All the great things done were for that end, that those might be saved who should come to Christ. Therefore you may be sure Christ will not be backward in saving those who come to him, and trust in him: for he has no desire to frustrate himself in his own work. Neither will God the Father refuse you; for he has no desire to frustrate himself in all that he did for so many hundreds and thousands of years, to prepare the way for the salvation of sinners by Christ. Come, therefore, hearken to the sweet and earnest calls of Christ to your soul. Do as he invites and as he commands you, Matt. xi. 28—30. "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

PERIOD III.

From Christ's Resurrection to the End of the World.

In discoursing on this subject, we have already shown how the work of redemption was carried on through the *two first* of the THREE PERIODS into which we divided the whole space of time from the fall to the end of the world. We are now come to the third and last period, beginning with Christ's resurrection; and would show, that the space of time from the end of Christ's humiliation to the end of the world is all taken up in bringing about the great effect or success of Christ's purchase.

SECT. I.

Scriptural Representations of this Period.

Not but that there were great effects and glorious success of Christ's purchase of redemption before, even from the beginning of the generations of men. But all that success which was before was only preparatory, by way of anticipation, as

some few fruits are gathered before the harvest. There was no more success before Christ came, than God saw needful to prepare the way for his coming. The proper time of the success or effect of Christ's redemption is after the purchase has been made, as the proper time for the world to enjoy the light of the sun is the day-time, after the sun is risen, though we may have some small matter of it reflected from the moon and planets before. And even the success of Christ's redemption while he himself was on earth, was very small in comparison of what it was after.

But, Christ having finished that greatest and most difficult of all works, now is come the time for obtaining the end, the glorious effect of it. Having gone through the whole course of his sufferings and humiliation, Christ is never to suffer any more. But now is the time for him to obtain the joy that was set before him. Having made his soul an offering for sin, now is the time for him to see his seed, to have a portion with the great, and to divide the spoil with the strong.

One design of Christ in what he did in his humiliation, was to lay a foundation for the overthrow of Satan's kingdom; and now is come the time to effect it, as Christ, a little before his crucifixion, said, John xii. 31. "Now is the judgment of this world; now shall the prince of this world be cast out." Another design was to gather together in one all things in Christ. Now is come the time for this also: John xii. 32. "And I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me;" which is agreeable to Jacob's prophecy of Christ, that "when Shiloh should come, to him should the gathering of the people be," Gen. xlix. 10. Another design is the salvation of the elect. Now when his sufferings are finished, and his humiliation perfected, the time is come for that also: Heb. v. 8, 9. "Though he was a Son, yet learned obedience by the things which he suffered: and being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him." Another design was, to accomplish by these things great glory to the persons of the Trinity. John xvii. 1. "Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee." Another design was the glory of the saints. John xvii. 11. "As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him." And all the dispensations of God's providence henceforward, even to the final consummation of all things, are to give Christ his reward, and fulfil his end in what he did and suffered upon earth, and to fulfil the joy that was set before him.

Before I enter on the consideration of any particular things accomplished in this period, I would briefly observe how the times of this period are represented in scripture.

I. The times of this period, for the most part, are in the Old Testament called *the latter days*. We often, in the prophets of the Old Testament, read of things that should come to pass *in the latter days*, and sometimes *in the last days*, evidently referring to gospel times. They are called *the latter days*, and *the last days*: because this is the last period of the series of God's providences on earth, the last period of the great work of redemption; which is as it were the sum of God's works of providence; the last dispensation of the covenant of grace on earth.

II. The whole time of this period is sometimes in scripture called *the end of the world*, 1 Cor. x. 11. "Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come." And the apostle, (Heb. ix. 26.) in this expression of *the end of the world*, means the whole of the gospel-day, from the birth of Christ to the day of judgment: "But now once in the end of the world, hath he appeared, to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself." This space of time may well be called *the end of the world;* for this whole time is taken up in bringing things to their great end and issue. Before, things were in a kind of preparatory state; but now they are in a finishing state. An end is now brought to the former carnal state of things, which by degrees vanishes, and a spiritual state begins to be established more and more. Particularly, an end is brought to the former state of the *church*, which may be called its worldly state, in which it was subject to carnal ordinances, and the rudiments of the world. Then an end is brought to the Jewish *commonwealth*, in the destruction of their city and country. After that, an end is brought to the old *Heathen empire* in Constantine's time. The next step is the finishing of *Satan's visible kingdom* in the world, upon the fall of Antichrist, and the calling of the Jews. And last will come the destruction of the outward frame of the world itself, at the conclusion of the day of judgment. Heaven and earth began to *shake*, in order to a dissolution, according to the prophecy of Haggai, before Christ came, that so only those things which cannot be shaken may remain, *i. e.* that those things which are to come to an end may terminate, and that only those things may remain which are to remain eternally.

In the first place, the carnal ordinances of the *Jewish worship* came to an end, in order to make way for the establishment of that spiritual worship, which is to endure to all eternity; John iv. 21. "Jesus saith unto the woman, Believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerasalem, worship the Father." Verse 23. "But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth, for the Father seeketh such to worship

him." This is one instance of the temporary world coming to an end, and the eternal world beginning. And then the outward *temple* and the *city* Jerusalem came to an end, to give place to the setting up of the spiritual temple and city, which are to last for ever. Another instance of removing those things which are ready to vanish away, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain, is the bringing to an end the old Heathen empire, to make way for the empire of Christ, which shall last to all eternity. After that, upon the fall of Antichrist, an end is put to Satan's visible kingdom on earth, to establish Christ's kingdom, which is an eternal kingdom; as the prophet Daniel says, chap. vii. 27. "And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him;" which is another instance of the ending of the temporary world, and the beginning of the eternal one. And then, lastly, the very frame of this corruptible world shall come to an end, to make way for the church to dwell in another dwelling-place, which shall last to eternity.

Because the world is thus coming to an end by various steps and degrees, the apostle perhaps uses this expression, that (not the *end* but) the *ends* of the world are come on us; as though the world has several endings one after another.—The gospel dispensation is a finishing state; it is all spent in finishing things off which before had been preparing, or abolishing things which before had stood. It is all spent as it were in summing things up, and bringing them to their issues, and their proper fulfilment. Now all the old types are fulfilled, and the predictions of all the prophets from the beginning of the world shall be accomplished in this period.

III. That state of things which is attained in the events of this period is called *a new heaven and a new earth:* Isa. lxv. 17, 18. "For behold, I create new heavens, and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind. But be you glad and rejoice forever in that which I create: for behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy." And chap. lxvi. 22. "For as the new heavens and the new earth which I make, shall remain before me; so shall your seed and your name remain." See also chap. li. 16. As the former state of things, or the old world, by one step after another, is through this period coming to an end: so the new state of things, or the new world which is a spiritual world, is beginning and setting up. In consequence of each of these finishings of the old state of things, there is the beginning of a new and eternal state. So that which accompanied the destruction of the literal Jerusalem, was an establishing of the spiritual. So with respect to the destruction of the old Heathen empire, and all

the other endings of the old state of things; till at length the very outward frame of the world itself shall come to an end; and the church shall dwell in heaven, which will be a new habitation. Then shall the utmost be accomplished that is meant by the new heavens and the new earth. (See Rev. xxi. 1.)

The end of God's creating the world, was to prepare a kingdom for his Son, (for he is appointed heir of the world,) which should remain to all eternity. So far as the *kingdom of Christ is set up* in the world, *so far* is the world brought to its end, and the eternal state of things set up—*so far* are all the great changes and revolutions in the world brought to their everlasting issue, and all things come to their ultimate period—*so far* are the waters of the long channel of divine providence, which has so many branches, and so many windings, emptied into their proper ocean, which they have been seeking from the beginning of their course, and so are come to their rest. So far as Christ's kingdom is established in the world, *so far* are things wound up and settled in their everlasting state, and a period put to the course of things in this changeable world; *so far* are the first heavens and the first earth come to an end, and the new heavens and the new earth, the everlasting heavens and earth, established in their room.—This leads me to observe,

IV. That the state of things which is attained by the events of this period, is what is so often called *the kingdom of heaven*, or *the kingdom of God*. We very often read in the New Testament of the kingdom of heaven. John the Baptist preached, that the kingdom of heaven was at hand; and so did Christ and his disciples after him; referring to something that the Jews in those days expected, and called by that name. They seem to have taken their expectation and the name chiefly from the prophecy of Daniel in Nebuchadnezzar's dream, Dan. ii. 44. "And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom;" together with chap. vii. 13, 14.

Now this *kingdom of heaven* is that evangelical state of things in the church, and in the world, wherein consists the success of Christ's redemption in this period. There had been often great kingdoms set up before; as the Babylonish, the Persian, the Grecian, and the Roman monarchies. But Christ came to set up the last, which is not an earthly kingdom, but an heavenly, John xviii. 36. "My kingdom is not of this world." This is the kingdom of which Christ speaks, Luke xxii. 29. "My Father hath appointed to me a kingdom." This kingdom began soon after Christ's resurrection, and is accomplished in *various steps* from that time to the end of the world. Sometimes by *the kingdom of heaven*, is meant not only that *spiritual* state of

the church which began soon after Christ's resurrection; but also that *more perfect* state which shall obtain after the downfall of Antichrist; and sometimes that *glorious* and blessed state to which the church shall be received at the day of judgment. So 1 Cor. xv. 50. "This I say, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God."—Under this head I would observe several things particularly, for the clearer understanding of what the scripture says concerning this period.

1. The setting up of the kingdom of Christ is chiefly accomplished by four successive great events, each of which is in scripture called *Christ's coming in his kingdom.* The *first* is Christ's appearing in those wonderful dispensations of providence in the apostle's days, in setting up his kingdom and destroying its enemies, which ended in the destruction of Jerusalem. This is called Christ's coming in his kingdom, Matt. xvi. 28 "Verily I say unto you, there be some standing here, which shall not taste of death till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom." (And Matt. xxiv.) The *second* is that which was accomplished in Constantine's time, in the destruction of the Heathen Roman empire. This is represented as Christ's coming, and is compared to his coming to judgment, (Rev. vi. at the latter end.) The *third* is that which is to be accomplished at ths destruction of Antichrist. This also is represented as Christ's coming in his kingdom in the 7th chapter of Daniel, and in other places. The *fourth* and last is his coming to the last judgment, which is the event principally signified in scripture by *Christ's coming in his kingdom.*

2. Each of the three former of these is a lively image, or type, of the fourth and last, *viz.* Christ's coming to the final judgment, as the principal dispensations of providence before, were types of his first coming.——As Christ's last coming to judgment is accompanied with the resurrection of the dead, so is each of the three foregoing with a spiritual resurrection. That coming of Christ which ended in the destruction of Jerusalem, was preceded by a glorious *spiritual* resurrection of souls in the calling of the Gentiles through the preaching of the gospel. Christ's coming in Constantine's time, was accompanied with a glorious *spiritual* resurrection of the greater part of the known world, in a restoration of it to a visible church state, from a state of Heathenism. Christ's coming at the destruction of Antichrist, will be attended with a *spiritual* resurrection of the church after it had been long as it were dead, in the times of Antichrist. This is called the *first resurrection* in the 20th chapter of Revelation.

Again, as Christ in the last judgment will gloriously manifest himself coming in the glory of his Father, so in each of the three foregoing events Christ gloriously manifested himself in sending judgments upon his enemies and in showing favour

to his church. As the last coming of Christ will be attended with a literal gathering together of the elect from the four winds of heaven, so were each of the preceding attended with a spiritual gathering in of the elect. As this gathering together of the elect will be effected by God's angels with a great sound of a trumpet; (Matt. xxiv. 31.) so were each of the preceding spiritual ingatherings effected by the trumpet of the gospel, sounded by the ministers of Christ. As there shall precede the last appearance of Christ, a time of great degeneracy and wickedness, so this has been, or will be, the case with each of the other appearances. Before each of them is a time of a great opposition to the church; before the first, by the Jews: before the second, in Constantine's time, by the Heathen; before the third, by Antichrist; and before the last, by Gog and Magog, as described in the Revelation.

By each of these comings of Christ, God works a glorious *deliverance* for his church. The *first*, which ended in the destruction of Jerusalem, was attended with bringing the church into the glorious state of the gospel. The *second*, which was in Constantine's time, was accompanied with an advancement of the church into a state of liberty from persecution, the countenance of civil authority, and her triumph over Heathen persecutors. The *third*, which shall be at the downfall of Antichrist, will be accompanied with an advancement of the church into that state of the glorious prevalence and truth, liberty, peace, and joy, which we so often read of in the prophetical parts of scripture. The *last* will be attended with the advancement of the church to consummate glory in heaven.

Each of these comings of Christ is accompanied with a terrible *destruction* of the wicked, and the enemies of the church: the *first*, with the destruction of the persecuting Jews, which was amazingly terrible; the *second*, with dreadful judgments on the Heathen persecutors of the church; the *third*, with the awful destruction of Antichrist, the most cruel and bitter enemy that ever the church had; the *fourth*, with divine wrath and vengeance on all the ungodly.—Further, there is in *each* of these comings of Christ an ending of the old, and a beginning of new heavens and a new earth; or an end of a temporal state of things, and a beginning of an eternal state.

3. I would observe, that each of those four great dispensations which are represented as Christ's coming in his kingdom, are but so many steps and degrees of the accomplishment of that one event prophesied of, Dan. vii. 13, 14. "And I saw in the night visions, and behold, one like the Son of man, came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an

everlasting dominion, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed." This is what the Jews expected, and called "the coming of the kingdom of heaven;" and what John the Baptist and Christ had respect to, when they said, "The kingdom of heaven is at hand." This great event is accomplished by several steps.

4. When Christ came with the preaching of the apostles, to set up his kingdom in the world, which dispensation ended with the destruction of Jerusalem, then it was accomplished in a *glorious* degree; when the Heathen empire was destroyed in Constantine's time, it was fulfilled in a *further* degree; when Antichrist shall be destroyed, it will be accomplished in a *yet higher* degree: but when the end of the world is come, then will it be accomplished in its *most perfect* degree of all. And because these four great events are but images one of another, and the three former but types of the last, and since they are all only several steps of the accomplishment of the same thing; hence we find them all from time to time prophesied of under one, as in the prophesies of Daniel, and in the 24th chapter of Matthew, where some things seem more applicable to one of them, and others to another.

Thus it appears, that as there are several steps of the accomplishment of the kingdom of Christ, so in each one of them the event is accomplished in a further degree than in the foregoing. That in the time of Constantine was a greater and further accomplishment of the kingdom of Christ, than that which ended in the destruction of Jerusalem; that which shall be at the fall of Antichrist, will be a further accomplishment of the same thing, than that which took place in the time of Constantine; and so on with regard to each: so that the kingdom of Christ is gradually prevailing and growing by these several great steps of its fulfilment, from the time of Christ's resurrection to the end of the world.

5. The great providences of God between these four events, are to make way for the kingdom and glory of Christ in the great event following. Those dispensations of providence towards the church and the world, before the destruction of the Heathen empire in the time of Constantine, seem all to have been to make way for the glory of Christ, and the happiness of the church in that event. And so the great providences after that, till the destruction of Antichrist, and the beginning of the glorious times of the church which follow, seem all calculated to prepare the way for the greater glory of Christ and his church in that event; and the following ones to the end of the world, seem to be for the greater manifestation of Christ's glory at the consummation of all things.—Thus I thought it needful to observe those things in general concerning this last period, before I take notice of *particular* providences by which the

work of redemption is carried on through this period, in their order.

Before I proceed, I will briefly answer an INQUIRY, *viz.* Why the setting up of Christ's kingdom after his humiliation, should be so gradual, since God could easily have finished it at once?—Though it would be presumption in us to pretend to declare all the ends of God in this, yet doubtless much of his wisdom may be seen in it; and particularly in these two things.

1. In this way the glory of God's wisdom, is more visible to the observation of creatures. If it had been done at once, or in a very short time, there would not have been such opportunities for creatures to perceive and observe the particular steps of divine wisdom, as when the work is gradually accomplished, and one effect of his wisdom is held forth to observation after another. It is wisely determined of God, to accomplish his great design by a wonderful and long series of events, that the glory of his wisdom may be displayed in the whole series of events, that the glory of his perfection may be seen, in particular successive manifestations. If all that glory which appears in these events had been manifested at once, it would have been too much for us; it would have overpowered our sight and capacities.

2. Satan is more gloriously triumphed over.——God could easily, by an act of almighty power, at once have crushed Satan. But by giving him time to use his utmost subtilty to hinder the success of what Christ had done and suffered, he is not defeated merely by surprise, but has large opportunity to ply his utmost power and subtilty again and again, to strengthen his own interest all that he can by the work of many ages. Thus God destroys and confounds him, and sets up Christ's kingdom time after time, in spite of all his subtle machinations and great works, and by every step advances it still higher and higher, till at length it is fully set up, and Satan perfectly and eternally vanquished.—I now proceed to take notice of the particular events, whereby, from the end of Christ's humiliation to the end of the world, the success of Christ's purchase has been or shall be accomplished.

SECT. II.

How Christ was capacitated for effecting his purpose.

As the incarnation of Christ was necessary in order to his being in a near capacity for the *purchase* of redemption; so his resurrection and ascension were requisite in order to the *success* of his purchase.

I. His *resurrection*. It was necessary in order to Christ's obtaining the end and effect of his purchase of redemption, that he should rise from the dead. For God the Father had committed the whole affair of redemption to his Son, that he should not only purchase it as priest, but actually bring it about as king; and that he should do this as God-man. God the Father would have nothing to do with fallen man in a way of mercy but by a mediator. But in order that Christ might accomplish the success of his own purchase as God-man, it was necessary that he should rise from the dead. Therefore Christ, after he had finished this purchase by death, rises from the dead, to fulfil the end of his purchase. This matter God the Father had committed unto him, that he might, as Lord of all, manage all to his own purposes: Rom. xiv. 9. "For to this end Christ both died and rose, and revived; that he might be Lord both of the dead and of the living."

Indeed Christ's resurrection, (and so his ascension,) was part of the success of what Christ did and suffered in his humiliation. For though Christ did not properly purchase *redemption* for himself, yet he purchased *eternal life* and glory for himself, as a reward of what he did and suffered: Phil. ii. 8, 9. "He humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him." And it may be looked upon as part of the success of Christ's purchase, since he did not rise as a *private* person, but as the *head* of the elect church; so that they did, as it were, all rise with him. Christ was justified in his resurrection, *i. e.* God acquitted and discharged him hereby, as having done and suffered enough for the sins of all the elect: Rom. iv. 25. "Who was delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification." And God put him in possession of eternal life, as the head of the church, as a sure earnest that they should follow. For when Christ rose from the dead, that was the beginning of eternal life in him. His life before his death was a mortal life, a temporal life; but after his resurrection it was an eternal life: Rom. vi. 9. "Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead, dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him." Rev. i. 18. "I am he that liveth, and was dead; and behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen."——But he was put in possession of this eternal life, as the head of the body; so that the whole church, as it were, rises in him. And now he, who lately suffered so much, is to suffer no more for ever, but has entered into eternal glory.

This resurrection of Christ is the most *joyful* event that ever came to pass; because hereby Christ rested from the great and difficult work of purchasing redemption, and received God's testimony, that it was finished. The death of Christ was the greatest and most wonderful event that ever

came to pass; but that has a great deal in it that is sorrowful. But by the resurrection of Christ, that sorrow is turned into joy. The head of the church, in that great event, enters on the possession of eternal life; and the whole church is, as it were, *begotten again to a lively hope*, 1 Pet. i. 3. Weeping had continued for a night, but now joy cometh in the morning. This is the day of his reigning, as the head of the church, and all the church reigns with him. This day was worthy to be commemorated with the greatest joy. Psal. cxviii. 24. "This is the day which the Lord hath made, we will rejoice and be glad in it." And therefore this, above all other days, is appointed to the end of the world, to be weekly sanctified, as a day of holy rest and joy, that the church therein may rest and rejoice with her head. And as the third chapter of Genesis is the most sorrowful chapter in the Bible, so those chapters in the evangelist, that give an account of the resurrection of Christ, may be looked upon as the most joyful. These give an account of the finishing of the purchase of redemption, and the beginning of the glory of the head of the church, as the greatest seal and earnest of the eternal glory of all the members.

It is further to be observed, that the day of the gospel most properly begins with the resurrection of Christ. Till Christ rose from the dead, the Old Testament dispensation remained: but now it ceases, all being fulfilled that was shadowed forth in the typical ordinances of that dispensation. Here most properly is the end of the Old Testament night; and Christ rising from the grave with joy and glory, was like the sun rising after a long night of darkness, appearing in joyful light to enlighten the world. Now that joyful dispensation begins, that glorious dispensation of which the prophets testified so much. Now the gospel-sun is risen in his glory, *and with healing in his wings*, that those who fear God's name may *go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall.*

II. Christ's *ascension* into heaven. In this I would include his sitting at the right hand of God. For Christ's ascension was nothing else, but ascending to God's right hand in glory. A deliverer of a people as their king, in order that he may be under the best capacity for it, is first installed in his throne. We are told, that Christ was exalted for this end, that he might accomplish the success of his redemption: Acts v. 31. "Him hath God exalted with his right hand, for to give repentance unto Israel, and the remission of sins."

Christ's ascension into heaven was, as it were, his solemn coronation, when the Father set him upon the throne, and invested him with the glory of that kingdom which he had purchased for himself, that he might thereby obtain the success of his redemption in conquering all his enemies: Psal. cx. 1.

"Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool." Christ entered into heaven, in order to obtain the success of his purchase, as the high priest of old, after he had offered sacrifice, entered into the holy of holies with the blood of the sacrifice, in order to obtain the success of the sacrifice which he had offered.—See Heb. ix. 12. He entered into heaven, there to make intercession for his people, to plead the sacrifice which he had made in order to the success of it, Heb. vii. 25.—And as he ascended into heaven, God the Father did in a visible manner set him on the throne as king of the universe. He then put the angels all under him, and subjected to him heaven and earth, that he might govern them for the good of the people for whom he died, Eph. i. 20—22. And as Christ rose from the dead, so he ascended into heaven, as the head of the body, and forerunner of all the church; and they, as it were, ascend with him; so that we are both raised up together, and made to sit together in heavenly places in Christ, Eph. ii. 6.

The day of Christ's ascension was doubtless a joyful, glorious day in heaven. And as heaven received Christ, God-man, as its king, so doubtless it received a great accession of glory and happiness. So that the times in both parts of the church, that part which is in heaven, and that which is on earth, are become more glorious since Christ's humiliation than before.—So much for those things whereby Christ was put into the best capacity for obtaining the success of redemption.

SECT. III.

Established Means of Success.

Consider those dispensations of providence, by which the *means of this success* were established after Christ's resurrection.

I. The abolishing of the *Jewish dispensation*. This indeed was gradually done, but it began from the time of Christ's resurrection, in which the abolition of it is founded. For the *Jewish* dispensation was not fitted for the practice of the world in general, or for a church of God dwelling in all parts of the world: nor would it have been practicable by them. It would have been impossible for men living in all parts of the world to go to Jerusalem three times a year, as was prescribed in that constitution. When therefore God had a design of enlarging his church, as he did after Christ's resurrection, it was necessary that this dispensation should be abolished. If it had been continued, it would have been a great block and hindrance to the enlargement of the church.

Besides, their ceremonial law, by reason of its burdensomeness, and great peculiarity of some of its rites, was a wall of partition between the Jews and Gentiles, and would have kept the Gentiles from complying with the true religion. This wall therefore was broken down to make way for the more extensive success of the gospel; as Eph. ii. 14, 15.

II. The next thing in order of time seems to be the appointment of the *Christian Sabbath*. For though this was gradually established in the Christian church, yet those things by which the revelation of God's mind and will was made, began on the day of Christ's resurrection, by his appearing then to his disciples, John xx. 19. And afterwards, his appearing was from time to time on that day rather than any other, John xx. 26. This appointment was confirmed by his sending down the Holy Spirit so remarkably on that day, Acts ii. 1; and afterwards by directing, that the public worship of Christians should be on that day, which may be concluded from Acts xx. 7. 1 Cor. xvi. 1, 2. and Rev. i. 10. And so the day of the week on which Christ rose from the dead, that joyful day, is appointed to be the day of the church's holy rejoicing to the end of the world, and the day of their stated public worship. And this is a very great and principal means of the success which the gospel has had in the world.

III. The next thing was Christ's appointment of the *gospel ministry*, by commissioning and sending forth his apostles to teach and baptize all nations. Of these things we have an account in Matt. xxviii. 19, 20. "Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." There were three things done by this one commission of Christ to his apostles, *viz.*

1. The appointment of the *office* of the gospel-ministry.—For this commission which Christ gives to his apostles, in the most essential parts of it, belongs to all ministers; and the apostles, by virtue of it, were ministers or elders of the church.

2. Something peculiar in this commission, *viz.* to go forth *from one nation to another*, preaching the gospel in all the world. The apostles had something above what belonged to their ordinary character as ministers; they had an extraordinary power of teaching and ruling, which extended to all the churches; and not only all the churches which then were, but all that should be to the end of the world by their ministry. And so the apostles were, in subordination to Christ, made foundations of the Christian church. See Eph. ii. 20. and Rev. xxi. 14.

3. Here is an appointment of Christian *baptism*. This

ordinance indeed had a beginning before John the Baptist and Christ baptized. But now especially by this institution is it established as an ordinance to be upheld in the Christian church to the end of the world.——The ordinance of the Lord's supper had been established before, just before Christ's crucifixion.

IV. The next thing to be observed, is the enduing the apostles, and others, with extraordinary and *miraculous gifts* of the Holy Ghost; such as the gift of tongues, the gift of healing, of prophecy, &c. The Spirit of God was poured out in great abundance in this respect; so that not only ministers, but a very great part of the Christians through the world were endued with them, both old and young; not only officers, and more honourable persons, but the meaner sort of people, servants and handmaids, agreeable to Joel's prophecy, Joel ii. 28, 29; of which prophecy the apostle Peter takes notice, that it is accomplished in this dispensation, Acts ii. 11.

How wonderful a dispensation was this! Under the Old Testament, but few had such honours put upon them by God. Moses indeed wished that all the Lord's people were prophets, Numb. xi. 29; whereas Joshua thought it much that Eldad and Medad prophesied. But now we find the wish of Moses fulfilled. And this continued in a very considerable degree to the end of the apostolic age, or the first hundred years after the birth of Christ, which is therefore called *the age of miracles.*

This was a great means of the success of the gospel, and of establishing the Christian church, not only in that age, but in all ages to the end of the world. For Christianity being established through so great a part of the known world by miracles, it was after that more easily continued by tradition; and by means of these extraordinary gifts of the Holy Ghost, the apostles and others were enabled to write the New Testament, to be an infallible and perpetual rule of faith and manners to the church. And these miracles recorded in those writings are a standing proof of the truth of Christianity to all ages.

V. The next thing is the revealing of those glorious doctrines fully and plainly, which had under the Old Testament been obscurely revealed. The doctrine of Christ's satisfaction and righteousness, his ascension and glory, and the way of salvation, were, under the Old Testament, in a great measure hid under the vail of types and shadows, and more obscure revelations, as Moses put a vail on his face, to hide the shining of it; but now the vail of the temple is rent from the top to the bottom. Christ, the antetype of Moses, shines; his face is without a vail; 2 Cor. iii. 12, 13, & 18. Now these glorious mysteries, which were in a great measure kept secret from the foundation of the world, are clearly

revealed. Eph. iii. 3—5. Rom. xvi. 25. "According to the revelation of the mystery which was kept secret since the world began, but now is made manifest;" and Col. i. 26. "Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and generations, but now is made manifest to his saints."

Thus the Sun of righteousness, after it is risen, begins to shine forth clearly, and not by a dim reflection as before.—Christ, before his death, revealed many things more clearly than ever they had been in the Old Testament; but the great mysteries of Christ's redemption, reconciliation by his death, and justification by his righteousness, were not so plainly revealed before Christ's resurrection. Christ gave this reason for it, that he would not put new wine into old bottles; and it was gradually done even after his resurrection. In all likelihood, Christ much more clearly instructed them personally after his resurrection, and before his ascension; as we read that he continued with them forty days, speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom, Acts i. 3; and that "he opened their understandings, that they might understand the Scriptures," Luke xxiv. 45. But the clear revelation of these things was principally after the pouring out of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost, agreeable to Christ's promise, John xvi. 12, 13. "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit, when the Spirit of truth is come, he shall guide you into all truth." This clear revelation of the mysteries of the gospel, as they are delivered, we have chiefly through the hands of the apostle Paul, by whose writings a child may come to know more of the doctrines of the gospel, in many respects, than the greatest prophets knew under the darkness of the Old Testament.

Thus we see how the light of the gospel, which began to dawn immediately after the fall, and gradually increased through all the ages of the Old Testament, is now come to the light of perfect day, as the brightness of the sun shining forth in his unvailed glory.

VI. The next thing that I would observe, is the appointment of the office of deacons in the Christian church, which we have an account of in the 6th chapter of the Acts, to take care for the outward supply of the members of Christ's church, and the exercise of that great Christian virtue, charity.

VII. The calling, qualifying, and sending the apostle Paul. This was begun in his conversion as he was going to Damascus, and was one of the greatest means of the success of Christ's redemption that followed: for this success was more by the labours, preaching, and writings of this apostle, than all the other apostles put together. For, as he says, 1 Cor. xv. 10, he "laboured more abundantly than they all." As he was the apostle of the Gentiles, so it was mainly by his min-

istry that the Gentiles were called, and the gospel spread through the world. Our nation, and the other nations of Europe, have the gospel among them chiefly through his means; and he was more employed by the Holy Ghost in revealing the glorious doctrines of the gospel by his writings, for the use of the church in all ages, than all the other apostles taken together.

VIII. The next thing I would observe, is the institution of ecclesiastical councils, for deciding controversies, and ordering the affairs of the church of Christ, of which we have an account in the 15th chapter of Acts.

IX. The last thing I shall mention under this head, is the committing the New Testament to writing. This was all written after the resurrection of Christ by the apostles themselves, except the gospels of Mark and Luke, and the book of the Acts. He that wrote the gospel of Mark, is supposed to be the son of Mary, in whose house they were praying for Peter, when he, brought out of prison by the angel, came and knocked at the door; of which we read, Acts xii. 12. "And when he had considered the thing, he came to the house of Mary, the mother of John, whose surname was Mark, where many were gathered together, praying." He was the companion of the apostles Barnabas and Paul: Acts xv. 37. "And Barnabas determined to take with them John, whose surname was Mark." —He was Barnabas's sister's son, and seems some time to have been a companion of the apostle Paul: Col. iv. 10. "Aristarchus, my fellow-prisoner, saluteth you, and Marcus, sister's son to Barnabas; touching whom ye received commandment: if he come unto you, receive him." The apostles seem to have made great account of him, as appears by those places, and also by Acts xii. 25. "And Barnabas and Saul returned from Jerusalem, and took with them John, whose surname was Mark;" and Acts xiii. 5. "And when they were at Salamis, they preached the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews; and they had also John to their minister;" and, 2 Tim. iv. 11. "Only Luke is with me: take Mark and bring him with thee; for he is profitable to me for the ministry."

He who wrote the gospel of Luke and the book of Acts was a great companion of the apostle Paul. Beside the last-mentioned place, he speaks of himself as accompanying Paul in his travels, and therefore speaks in the first person plural; We went to such a place; we set sail, &c. He was greatly beloved by the apostle Paul; he is that beloved physician spoken of, Col. iv. 14. The apostle ranks Mark and Luke among his fellow-labourers, Philemon 24. "Marcus, Aristarchus, Demas, Lucas, my fellow-labourers."

The books of the New Testament are either historical, doctrinal, or prophetical. The *historical* books are the writings

of the four evangelists, giving us the history of Christ, his purchase of redemption, his resurrection and ascension; and the Acts of the Apostles, giving an account of the great things by which the Christian church was first established and propagated. The *doctrinal* books are the epistles; most of which we have from the great apostle Paul. And we have one *prophetical* book, which takes place after the end of the history of the whole Bible, and gives an account of the great events which were to come to pass, by which the work of redemption was to be carried on to the end of the world.

All these books are supposed to have been written before the destruction of Jerusalem, excepting those which were written by the apostle John, who lived the longest of all the apostles, and who wrote after the destruction of Jerusalem, as is supposed. To this beloved disciple it was that Christ revealed those wonderful things which were to come to pass in his church to the end of time; and he was the person who put the finishing hand to the canon of scripture, and sealed the whole of it. So that now the canon of scripture, that great and standing written rule, which was begun about Moses' time, is completed and settled, and a curse denounced against him that adds any thing to it, or diminishes any thing from it. And so all the stated means of grace were finished in the apostolical age, or before the death of the apostle John, and are to remain unaltered to the day of judgment. Thus far we have considered those things by which the means of grace were given and established in the Christian church.

SECT. IV.

How the Success was carried on.

From Christ's resurrection till the fall of Antichrist, is the appointed day of Zion's troubles. During this space of time, some part or other of the church is under persecution; and great part of the time, the whole church, or at least the generality of God's people, have been persecuted. For the first three hundred years after Christ, the church was for the most part in a state of great affliction, the object of reproach and persecution: first by the Jews, and then by the Heathen.—After this, from the beginning of Constantine's time, the church had rest and prosperity for a little while: which is represented in Rev. vii. at the beginning, by the angel's holding the four winds for a little while. But presently after, the church again suffered persecution from the Arians. After that, Antichrist rose, the church was driven away into the wilderness, was kept down in obscurity, contempt, and suffering,

for a long time before the reformation by Luther and others. And since the Reformation, the church's persecutions have been beyond all that ever were before. And though some parts of God's church sometimes have had rest, yet, to this day, for the most part, the true church is very much kept under by its enemies, and some parts of it under grievous persecution. And so we may expect it will continue till the fall of Antichrist. Then will come the appointed day of the church's prosperity on earth, the set time in which God will favour Zion, the time when the saints shall not be kept under by wicked men, but wherein they shall reign, as it is said, Rev. v. 10. "And the kingdom shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High," Dan. vii. 27.

The suffering state of the church is in scripture represented as a state of the church's travail, (John xvi. 20, 21. and Rev. xii, 1, 2.) striving to bring forth that glory and prosperity which shall be after the fall of Antichrist, and then shall she bring forth her child. This is a long time of the church's trouble and affliction, though it be but for a little season, in comparison of the eternal prosperity of the church. Hence under the long continuance of this affliction, she cries out, (Rev. vi. 10.) "How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?" And we are told, that "white robes were given unto every one of them; and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellow-servants also, and their brethren that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled." So Dan. xii. 6. "How long shall it be to the end of these wonders?"

It is to be observed, that during the time of these sufferings of the church, the main instrument of their sufferings has been the Roman government. Rome, therefore, in the New Testament, is called *Babylon;* because, as of old, the troubles of the city of Jerusalem were mainly from that adverse city, Babylon, so the troubles of the christian church, the spiritual Jerusalem, during the long time of its tribulation, is mainly from Rome. Before the time of Constantine, the troubles of the Christian church were from Heathen Rome; since that time, its troubles have been mainly from Antichristian Rome. And as of old, the captivity of the Jews ceased on the destruction of Babylon, so the time of the trouble of the Christian church will cease with the destruction of the church of Rome, that spiritual Babylon.

PART I.

The Success of Redemption from the Resurrection of Christ to the Destruction of Jerusalem.

I WOULD now show, how the success of Christ's purchase of redemption was carried on from Christ's resurrection to the destruction of Jerusalem. In speaking of this I would,—1. Take notice of the success itself; and, 2. The opposition made against it by its enemies; and, 3. The terrible judgments of God on those enemies.

I. I would observe the *success itself*. Soon after Christ had entered into the holy of holies with his own blood, there began a glorious success of what he had done and suffered.—Having undermined the foundation of Satan's kingdom, it began to fall apace. Swiftly did it hasten to ruin, which might well be compared to Satan's falling like lightning from heaven. Satan before had exalted his throne very high in this world, even to the very stars of heaven, reigning with great glory in his Heathen Roman empire; but never before had he such a downfall as he had soon after Christ's ascension. He had, we may suppose, been very lately triumphing in a supposed victory, having brought about the death of Christ, which he doubtless gloried in as the greatest feat that ever he did; and probably imagined he had totally defeated God's design by him. But he was quickly made sensible, that he had only been ruining his own kingdom, when he saw it tumbling so fast so soon after, as a consequence of the death of Christ. For Christ, having ascended, and received the Holy Spirit, poured it forth abundantly for the conversion of thousands and millions of souls.

Never had Christ's kingdom been so set up in the world. There probably were more souls converted in the age of the apostles, than had been before from the beginning of the world till that time. Thus God so soon begins gloriously to accomplish his promise to his Son, wherein he had promised, That he should see his seed, and that the pleasure of the Lord should prosper in his hand, if he would make his soul an offering for sin. And,

1. Here is to be observed the success which the gospel had among the *Jews;* for God first began with them. He being about to reject the main body of that people, first calls in his elect from among them. It was so in former great and dreadful judgments of God on that nation: the bulk of them were destroyed, and only a remnant saved or reformed. The bulk of the ten tribes was rejected, when they left the true wor-

ship of God under Jeroboam, and afterwards more fully in Ahab's time; but yet there was a remnant of them reserved. Many left their possessions in these tribes, and settled in the tribes of Judah and Benjamin. And afterwards there were seven thousand in Ahab's time, who had not bowed the knee to Baal. From the captivity into Babylon, only a remnant of them ever returned to their own land. So now the greater part of the people were rejected entirely, but some few were saved. And therefore the Holy Ghost compares this reservation of a number that were converted by the preaching of the apostles, to those former remnants: Rom. ix. 27. "Esaias also crieth concerning Israel, Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, a remnant shall be saved."—See Isa. x. 22.

The glorious success of the gospel among the Jews after Christ's ascension, began by the pouring out of the Spirit upon the day of Pentecost. (Acts ii.) So wonderful was this effusion, and so remarkable and swift the effect of it, that we read of three thousand who were converted to the Christian faith in one day, Acts ii. 41; and probably the greater part of these were savingly converted. And after this, we read of God's adding to the church daily such as should be saved, (ver. 47.) Soon after, we read, that the number of them were about five thousand. Thus were not only a multitude converted, but the church was then eminent in piety, as appears by Acts ii. 46, 47. iv. 32.

Thus the Christian church was first formed from the nation of Israel; and therefore, when the Gentiles were called, they were *added* to the Christian church of Israel, as the proselytes of old were to the Mosaic church of Israel. They were only *grafted* on the stock of Abraham, and were not a distinct tree; for they were all still the seed of Abraham and Israel; as Ruth the Moabitess, and Uriah the Hittite, and other proselytes of old, were the same people, and ranked as the seed of Israel.

The Christian church began at Jerusalem, and from thence was propagated to all nations; so that this church of Jerusalem was the mother of all other churches in the world; agreeable to the prophecy, Isa. ii. 3, 4. "Out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem: and he shall judge among the nations, and rebuke many people." So that the whole church of God is still his spiritual Jerusalem.

After this, we read of many thousands of Jews in Jerusalem, that believed, Acts xxi. 20. And we read of multitudes of Jews who were converted in other cities of Judea, and in other parts of the world. For it was the manner of the apostles to go first into the synagogues of the Jews, and

preach the gospel to them, and many in one place and another believed; as in Damascus, Antioch, and many other places.

In this pouring out of the Spirit, at the Pentecost, began that first great dispensation which is called *Christ's coming in his kingdom.* Christ's coming thus in a spiritual manner for the glorious erection of his kingdom in the world, is represented as his coming down from heaven, whither he had ascended, John xiv. 18. "I will not leave you comfortless; I will come unto you." And verse 28. "Ye have heard how I said unto you, I go away, and come again unto you." And thus the apostles began to see the kingdom of heaven come with power, as he promised them, Mark ix. 1.

2. After the success of the gospel had been so gloriously begun among the Jews, the Spirit of God was next wonderfully poured out on the *Samaritans*, who were the posterity of those whom the king of Assyria removed from different parts of his dominions, and settled in the land which had been inhabited by the ten tribes, whom he carried captive. These had received the five books of Moses, and practised most of the Mosaic rites, and so were a sort of *mongrel Jews.* We do not find them reckoned as Gentiles in the New Testament: for the calling of the Gentiles is spoken of as a new thing after this, beginning with the conversion of Cornelius. But yet it was an instance of making those a people who were no people; for they had corrupted the religion of Moses, and did not go up to Jerusalem to worship. They had another temple of their own in Mount Gerizzim; which is the mountain of which the woman of Samaria speaks, when she says, "Our fathers worshipped in this mountain." Christ there does not approve of their separation from the Jews; but says, that they worshipped they knew not what, and that salvation is of the Jews. But now salvation is brought from the Jews to them by the preaching of Philip, (excepting that before Christ had some success among them,) with whose preaching there was a glorious pouring out of the Spirit of God in the city of Samaria; where we are told, that "the people believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of Christ, and were baptized, both men and women; and that there was great joy in that city," Acts viii. 8—12.

Thus Christ had a glorious harvest in Samaria; according to what he said to his disciples at Jacob's well, three or four years before, on occasion of the people of Samaria appearing at a distance in the fields coming to the place where he was. John iv. 35, 36. The disposition which the people of Samaria showed towards Christ and his gospel, showed that they were ripe for the harvest; and now the harvest is come by Philip's preaching. There used to be a most bitter enmity between the Jews and Samaritans: but now, by their conversion, the

Christian Jews and Samaritans are all happily united; for in Christ Jesus is neither Jew nor Samaritan, but Christ is all in all. This was a glorious instance of the wolf dwelling with the lamb, and the leopard lying down with the kid.

3. The next thing to be observed is the calling the Gentiles. This was a great and glorious dispensation, much spoken of in the Old Testament, and by the apostles, as a most glorious event. This was begun in the conversion of Cornelius and his family, greatly to the admiration of Peter, who was used as the instrument of it, and of those who were with him, Acts x. and xi. The next instance was the conversion of great numbers of Gentiles in Cyprus, Cyrene, and Antioch, by the disciples who were scattered abroad by the persecution which arose about Stephen, Acts xi. 19, 20, 21. And presently, upon this, the disciples began to be called Christians first at Antioch, (verse 26.)

After this vast multitudes of Gentiles were converted in different parts of the world, chiefly by the ministry of the apostle Paul. Multitudes flocked into the church of Christ in a great number of cities where the apostle came. So the number of Gentile members of the Christian church, soon far exceeded that of its Jewish members; yea, in less than ten years' time after Paul was sent forth from Antioch to preach to the Gentiles, it was said of him and his companions, that they had turned the world upside down: Acts xvii. 6. "These that have turned the world upside down are come hither also." But the most remarkable instance seems to be that in *Ephesus*, which was a very great city, Acts xix. There was also a very extraordinary ingathering of souls at *Corinth*, one of the greatest cities in all Greece. And after this many were converted in *Rome*, the chief city of all the world; and the gospel was propagated into all parts of the Roman empire. Thus the gospel-sun which had lately risen on the Jews, now rose upon, and began to enlighten the Heathen world, after they had continued in gross heathenish darkness for so many ages.

This was a great and new thing, such as never had been before. All nations but the Jews, and a few who had occasionally joined them, had been rejected from about the time of Moses. The gentile world had been covered with the thick darkness of idolatry; but now, at the joyful sound of the gospel, they began in all parts to forsake their idols, and to cast them to the moles and to the bats. They now learned to worship the true God, and to trust in his Son Jesus Christ. God owned them for his people; and those who had so long been afar off, were made nigh by the blood of Christ. Men, from being heathenish and brutish, became the children of God; were called out of Satan's kingdom of darkness, and

brought into God's marvellous light. In almost all countries throughout the known world there were Christian assemblies, and joyful praises were sung to the true God, and Jesus Christ the glorious Redeemer. Now that great building which God began soon after the fall of man, rises gloriously, in a new manner; now Daniel's prophecies concerning the last kingdom, which should succeed the four heathenish monarchies, begins to be fulfilled; now the stone cut out of the mountain without hands, began to smite the image on its feet, and to break it in pieces, and to make great advances towards filling the earth; and now God gathers together his elect from the four winds of heaven, by the preaching of the apostles and other ministers, (the angels of the Christian church sent forth with the great sound of the gospel-trumpet,) before the destruction of Jerusalem, agreeable to what Christ foretold, Matt. xxiv. 31.

II. I would proceed now, in the second place, to take notice of the *opposition* which was made to this success of Christ's purchase by the enemies of it.—Satan, who lately was so ready to triumph and exult, as though he had gained the victory in putting Christ to death, now finding himself fallen into the pit which he had digged, and finding his kingdom falling so fast, and seeing Christ's kingdom make such amazing progress, was filled with the greatest confusion and astonishment; and hell seemed to be effectually alarmed to make the most violent opposition against it. And, first, the devil stirred up the Jews, who had before crucified Christ to persecute the church; for it is observable, that the persecution which the church suffered during this period, was mostly from the Jews. Thus we read in the Acts, when the Holy Ghost was poured out at Pentecost, how the Jews mocked, and said, *These men are full of new wine;* and how the scribes and Pharisees, and the captain of the temple, were alarmed, and bestirred themselves to oppose and persecute the apostles. They first apprehended and threatened them, and afterwards imprisoned and beat them; and breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, they stoned Stephen in a tumultuous rage; and were not content to persecute those that they could find in Judea, but sent abroad to Damascus and other places, to persecute all that they could find every where. Herod who was chief among them, stretched forth his hands to vex the church, and killed James with the sword, and proceeded to take Peter also, and cast him into prison.

So, in other countries we find, that almost wherever the apostles came, the Jews opposed the gospel in a most malignant manner, contradicting and blaspheming! How many things did the blessed apostle Paul suffer at their hands! How violent and bloodthirsty did they shew themselves towards him,

when he came to bring alms to his nation! In this persecution and cruelty was fulfilled that saying of Christ, Matt. xxiii. 34. "Behold, I send you prophets, and wise men, and scribes; and some of them ye shall kill and crucify, and some of them shall ye scourge in your synagogues, and persecute them from city to city."

III. I proceed to take notice of the *judgments* which were executed on those enemies of Christ, the persecuting Jews.

1. The bulk of the people were given up to judicial blindness of mind and hardness of heart. Christ denounced such a woe upon them in the days of his flesh; Matt. xiii. 14, 15.—This curse was also denounced on them by the apostle Paul, Acts xxviii. 25, 26, 27; and under this curse, this judical blindness and hardness, they remain to this very day, having been subject to it for about seventeen hundred years, being the most awful instance of such a judgment, and monument of God's terrible vengeance, of any people. That they should continue from generation to generation so obstinately to reject Christ, so that it is a very rare thing that any one of them is converted to the Christian faith—though their own scriptures of the Old Testament, which they acknowledge, are so full of plain testimonies against them—is a remarkable evidence of their being dreadfully left of God.

2. They were rejected from being any longer God's visible people. They were broken off from the stock of Abraham, and since that have no more been reputed his seed, than the Ishmaelites or Edomites, who are as much his natural seed as they. The greater part of the two tribes were now cast off, as the ten tribes had been before, and another people were taken in their room, agreeable to the predictions of their own prophets, Deut. xxxii. 21. "They have moved me to a jealousy with that which is not God; they have provoked me to anger with their vanities; and I will move them to jealousy with those which are not a people; I will provoke them to anger with a foolish nation;" and Isaiah lxv. i. "I am sought of them that asked not for me; I am found of them that sought me not."—They were visibly rejected by God's directing his apostles to turn away from them, and let them alone; Acts xiii. 36, 47. "Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold, and said, It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you; but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles; for so hath the Lord commanded us." And so Acts xviii. 6. and xxviii. 28.

Thus far we have the scripture history to guide us: henceforward we shall have the guidance only of scripture prophecy and human histories.

3. The third and last judgment of God on those enemies of the success of the gospel which I shall mention, is the

terrible destruction of their city and country by the Romans. They had great warnings and many means used with them before this destruction. First, John the Baptist warned them, and told them, that the axe was laid at the root of the tree; and that every tree which should not bring forth good fruit, should be hewn down, and cast into the fire. Then Christ warned them very particularly, and told them of their approaching destruction, at the thoughts of which he wept over them. And then the apostles, after Christ's ascension, abundantly warned them. But they proved obstinate, and went on in their opposition to Christ and his church, and in their bitter persecuting practices. Their so malignantly persecuting the apostle Paul, of which we have an account towards the end of the Acts of the Apostles, is supposed to have been not more than seven or eight years before their destruction.

After this, God was pleased to give them one more very remarkable warning by the apostle Paul, in his epistle to the Hebrews, written, it is supposed, about four years before their destruction; wherein the plainest and clearest arguments are set before them from their own law, and from their prophets, for whom they professed such a regard, to prove that Christ Jesus must be the Son of God, that all their law typified him, and that the Jewish dispensation must needs have ceased. For though the epistle was more immediately directed to the Christian Hebrews, yet the matter of the epistle plainly shows that the apostle intended it for the use and conviction of the unbelieving Jews. And in this epistle he mentions particularly the approaching destruction, chap. x. 25. "So much the more, as ye see the day approaching;" and in ver. 27, he speaks of the approaching judgment and *fiery indignation which should devour the adversaries.*

But the generality of them, refusing to receive conviction, God soon destroyed with such terrible circumstances, as the destruction of no country or city since the foundation of the world can parallel: agreeable to what Christ foretold, Matt. xxiv. 21. "For then shall be tribulation, such as was not from the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be." The first destruction of Jerusalem by the Babylonians was very terrible, as it is in a most affecting manner described by the prophet Jeremiah, in his Lamentations; but that was nothing to the dreadful misery and wrath which they suffered in this destruction. God, as Christ foretold, brought on them all the righteous blood that had been shed from the foundation of the world. Thus the enemies of Christ are made his footstool after his ascension, agreeable to God's promise in Psal. cx.; and he rules them with a rod of iron. The briars and

thorns set themselves against him in battle: but he went through them; he burned them together.

This destruction of Jerusalem was in all respects agreeable to what Christ had foretold of it, Matt. xiv.; as appears by the account which Josephus gives of it, who was then present, who had a share in the calamity, and who wrote the history of their destruction. Many circumstances resembled the destruction of the wicked at the day of judgment; by his account, it was accompanied with many fearful sights in the heavens, and with a separation of the righteous from the wicked. Their city and temple were burnt, and razed to the ground; and the ground on which the city stood was ploughed, so that one stone was not left upon another, Matt. xxiv. 2.

The people had ceased for the most part to be an independent government after the Babylonish captivity; but the sceptre entirely departed from Judah on the death of Archelaus, when Judea was made a Roman province. After this, they were cast off from being the people of God: but now their very city and land are utterly destroyed, and they carried away from it; and so have continued in their dispersions through the world for now above sixteen hundred years.

Thus there was a final end put to the Old Testament world: all was finished with a kind of day of judgment, in which the people of God were saved, and his enemies terribly destroyed.—Thus does he who was so lately mocked, despised, and spit upon by these Jews, and whose followers they so malignantly persecuted, appear gloriously exalted over his enemies.

PART II.

The Success of Redemption from the Destruction of Jerusalem, to the Time of Constantine.

Jerusalem was destroyed about the year of our Lord sixty-eight, and so before that generation passed away which was contemporary with Christ. The destruction of the Heathen empire under Constantine, was about two hundred and sixty year after this. In showing how the success of the gospel was carried on through this time, I would,—1. Take notice of the opposition made against it by the Roman empire.—2. How the work of the gospel went on notwithstanding all that oppo-

sition—3. The peculiar circumstances of tribulation and distress that the church was in just before their deliverance by Constantine; and 4. The great revolution in Constantine's time.

I. I would briefly show what *opposition* was made against the gospel, and the kingdom of Christ, by the Roman empire. This opposition was mainly after the destruction of Jerusalem, though it began before; but that which was before the destruction of Jerusalem, was mainly by the Jews. When Jerusalem was destroyed, the Jews were much incapacitated for troubling the church; therefore the devil turns his hand elsewhere, and uses other instruments. The opposition which was made in the Roman empire against the kingdom of Christ, was chiefly of two kinds.

1. They employed all their learning, philosophy, and wit, in opposing it. Christ came into the world in an age wherein learning and philosophy were at their height in the Roman empire. The gospel, which held forth a crucified Saviour, was not at all agreeable to the notions of the philosophers.—The Christian scheme of trusting in such a crucified Redeemer, appeared foolish and ridiculous to them. Greece was a country the most famous for learning of any in the Roman empire: but the apostle observes, that the doctrine of Christ crucified appeared foolishness to the Greeks, 1 Cor. i. 23; and therefore the wise men and philosophers opposed the gospel with all the wit they had. We have a specimen of their manner of opposing, in their treatment of the apostle Paul at Athens, which was and had been for many ages, the chief seat of philosophers in all the whole world. We read in Acts xvii. 18, that the philosophers of the Epicureans and Stoics encountered him saying, *What will this babbler say? He seemeth to be a setter forth of strange Gods.* Thus they were wont to deride and ridicule Christianity; and, after the destruction of Jerusalem, several philosophers published books against it. The chief of these were Celsus and Porphyry, who wrote with a great deal of virulence and contempt, much after the manner of the Deists of the present age. As great enemies and despisers as they were of the Christian religion, they never denied the facts recorded of Christ and his apostles in the New Testament, particularly the miracles which they wrought, but allowed them. They lived too near the times of these miracles to deny them; for they were so publicly done, and so lately, that neither Jews nor Heathens in those days appeared to deny them; but they ascribed them to the power of magic.

2. The authority of the Roman empire employed all their strength, time after time, to persecute, and if possible to root out Christianity. This they did in ten general successive persecutions. We have heretofore observed that Christ came into

the world when the strength of Heathen dominion and authority was the greatest under the Roman monarchy. All the strength of this monarchy was employed for a long time to oppose and persecute the Christian church, and if possible to destroy it, in ten successive attempts, which are called *the ten Heathen persecutions.*

The *first* of these, which was the persecution under Nero, was a little before the destruction of Jerusalem, in which the apostle Peter was crucified, and the apostle Paul beheaded, soon after he wrote his second epistle to Timothy. When he wrote that epistle, he was a prisoner at Rome under Nero, and says, chap. iv. 6, 7, "I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith." There were many thousands of other Christians slain in that persecution. The other nine persecutions were all after the destruction of Jerusalem. Some of these were very terrible indeed, and far exceeded the first persecution under Nero. One Emperor after another set himself with the utmost rage to root out the Christian church from the earth, that there should not be so much as the name of Christian left in the world. Thousands, yea millions were put to cruel deaths in them; for they spared neither sex nor age.

In the *second* general persecution, (under Domitian,) that which was next after the destruction of Jerusalem, the apostle John was banished to the isle of Patmos, where he had those visions which he has recorded in the Revelation. Under that persecution it was reckoned, that about forty thousand suffered martyrdom; which yet were nothing to what were put to death under some succeeding persecutions. Ten thousand suffered that one kind of cruel death, crucifixion, in the *third* persecution under the Emperor Adrian. Under the *fourth* persecution, which began about the year of Christ one hundred and sixty-two, many suffered martyrdom in England, the land of our forefathers, where Christianity had been planted, it is supposed, in the days of the apostles. And in the *later* persecutions, the Roman emperors being vexed at the frustration of their predecessors, who were not able to extirpate Christianity, or hinder its progress, were enraged to be the more violent in their attempts.

Thus a great part of the first three hundred years after Christ was spent in violent and cruel persecutions of the church by the Roman powers. Satan was very unwilling to quit his hold of so great and distinguished a part of the world, as the countries contained in the Roman empire, of which he had had the quiet possession for so many ages: and therefore, when he saw it going so fast out of his hands, he bestirred himself to his utmost. All hell was raised to oppose it with its utmost power.

Satan thus exerting himself by the power of the Heathen Roman empire, is called *the great red dragon*, having seven heads and ten horns, fighting against the woman clothed with the sun. (Rev. xii.) And this terrible conflict between the church of Christ, and the powers of the Heathen empire before Constantine, is represented (verse 7) by the war between Michael and his angels, and the dragon and his angels; "And there was war in heaven; Michael and his angels fought, and the dragon fought and his angels."

II. I would take notice what success the gospel had in the world before the time of Constantine, notwithstanding all this opposition.——Though the learning and power of the Roman empire were so great, and both were employed to the utmost against Christianity; yet all was in vain. They could neither root it out, nor stop its progress. In spite of all, the kingdom of Christ wonderfully prevailed, and Satan's Heathen kingdom mouldered and consumed away before it, agreeable to the text, "The moth shall eat them up like a garment, and the worm shall eat them like wool." And it was very observable that for the most part the more they persecuted the church, the more it increased; insomuch that it became a common saying, The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church.—Herein the church of Christ proved to be like a palm-tree; of which it is remarked, that the greater weight is hung to its branches, the more it grows and flourishes. On this account probably the church is compared to a palm tree, Cant. vii. 7. "This thy stature is like to a palm-tree." Justin Martyr, an eminent father in the Christian church, says, that in his days there was no part of mankind, whether Greeks or barbarians, or by what name soever they were called, even the most rude and unpolished nations, where prayers and thanksgivings were not made to the great Creator of the world, through the name of the crucified Jesus. Tertullian, another eminent father in the Christian church, who lived in the beginning of the following age, testifies, that in his day the Christian religion had extended itself to the utmost bounds of the then known world, in which he reckons Britain; and thence demonstrates, that the kingdom of Christ was then more extensive than any of the four great monarchies. He moreover says, that though the Christians were as strangers of no long standing, yet they had filled all places of the Roman dominions, their cities, islands, castles, corporations, councils, armies, tribes, the palace, senate, and courts of judicature; only they had left to the Heathen their temples. He adds, that if they should all agree to retire out of the Roman empire, the world would be amazed at the solitude and desolation that would ensue upon it, there would be so few left; and that the Christians were enough to be able easily to defend themselves, if they were disposed to rise up in arms against the Heathen magistrates.—

And Pliny, a heathen who lived in those days, says, That multitudes of each sex, of every age and quality, were become Christians. This superstition, says he, having infected and overrun not the city only, but towns and countries, the temples and sacrifices are generally desolate and forsaken.

And it was remarked by both Heathen and Christian writers in those days, that the famous Heathen oracles in their temples—where princes and others for many past ages had been wont to inquire and receive answers with an audible voice from their gods, which were indeed answers from the devil, were now struck dumb, and gave no more answers; and particularly the oracle at Delphos, the most famous in the whole world, which both Greeks and Romans used to consult, began to cease to give any answers, even from the birth of Christ. The false deity who was worshipped, and who used to give answers from his oracle in that temple, being once inquired of, why he did not now give answers as he was wont to do? made this reply, (as several Heathen historians who lived about those times relate,) There is a Hebrew boy, who is king of the gods, who has commanded me to leave this house, and begone to hell, and therefore you are to expect no more answers.—And many Heathen writers, who lived about that time, speak much of the oracles being silenced, at which they wondered, not knowing what the cause should be. Plutarch wrote a particular treatise about it, which is still extant. And Porphyry, who opposed the Christian religion, has these words: "It is no wonder, if the city for these so many years has been overrun with sickness: Esculapius, and the rest of the gods, having withdrawn their converse with men; for since Jesus began to be worshipped, no man has received any public help or benefit by the gods." Thus did the kingdom of Christ prevail against the kingdom of Satan.

III. I now proceed to take notice of the peculiar circumstances of tribulation and distress just before Constantine the Great came to the throne. This distress they suffered under the *tenth* Heathen persecution, which, as it was the last, so it was by far the heaviest and most severe. The church before this, after the ceasing of the *ninth* persecution, had enjoyed a time of quietness for about forty years together; but, abusing their liberty, they began to grow cold and lifeless in religion, and contentions prevailed among them; by which they offended God to suffer this dreadful trial to come upon them. And Satan having lost ground so much, notwithstanding all his attempts, now seemed to bestir himself with more than ordinary rage. Those who were then in authority set themselves with the utmost violence to root out Christianity, by burning all Bibles, and destroying all Christians; and there-

fore they did not stand to try or convict them in a formal process, but fell upon them wherever they could. Sometimes they set fire to houses where multitudes of them were assembled, burning them all together; at other times they slaughtered such multitudes that their persecutors were quite spent with the labour of killing and tormenting them; and in some populous places, so many were slain together, that the blood ran like torrents. It is related, that seventeen thousand martyrs were slain in one month's time; and that during the continuance of this persecution, in the province of Egypt alone, no less than one hundred and forty-four thousand Christians died by the violence of their persecutors, besides seven hundred thousand that died through the fatigues of banishment, or the public works to which they were condemned.

This persecution lasted for ten years together; and as it exceeded all foregoing persecutions in the number of martyrs, so it exceeded them in the variety and multitude of inventions of torture and cruelty. Some authors who lived at that time, say, they were innumerable, and exceed all account and expression. This persecution in particular was very severe in England; and is that which was foretold in Rev. vi. 9, 10. "And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the Word of God, and for the testimony which they held. And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?" And at the end of the ten years, during which this persecution continued, the Heathen persecutors thought they had finished their work, and boasted that they had utterly destroyed the name and superstition of the Christians, and had restored and propagated the worship of the gods.

Thus it was the darkest time with the Christian church, just before the break of day. They were brought to the greatest extremity before God appeared for their glorious deliverance, as the bondage of the Israelites in Egypt was the most severe and cruel just before their deliverance by the hand of Moses. Their enemies thought they had swallowed them up, and sealed their destruction, as Pharaoh and his host thought when they had hemmed in the children of Israel at the Red Sea.

IV. I come now, in the fourth place, to the great revolution by Constantine, which was in many respects like Christ's appearing in the clouds of heaven to save his people, and judge the world. The people of Rome being weary of the government of those tyrants to whom they had lately been subject, sent to Constantine, who was then in the city of York in England, to come and take the throne. He was encouraged, it is said, by a vision of a pillar of light in the heavens, in the

form of a cross, in the sight of his whole army, with this inscription, εν τουτω νικα, *in this overcome;* and the night following, by Christ's appearing to him in a dream with the same cross in his hand, who directed him to make a cross like that to be his royal standard, that his army might fight under that banner, and assured him that he should overcome. Accordingly he overcame his enemies, took possession of the imperial throne, embraced the Christian religion, and was the first Christian emperor that ever reigned. He came to the throne about three hundred and twenty years after Christ. There are several things which I would take notice of which attended, or immediately followed, Constantine's coming to the throne.

1. The Christian church was thereby wholly delivered from persecution. Now the day of her deliverance came after such a dark night of affliction: weeping had continued for a night, but now deliverance and joy came in the morning. Now God appeared to judge his people, and repented himself for his servants, when he saw their power was gone, and that there was none shut up or left. Christians had no persecutions now to fear. Their persecutors now were all put down, and their rulers were some of them Christians like themselves.

2. God now appeared to execute terrible judgments on their enemies. Remarkable are the accounts which history gives of the fearful ends to which the heathen emperors, princes, generals, captains, and other great men were brought, who had exerted themselves in persecuting the Christians; dying miserably, one after another, under exquisite torments of body, and horrors of conscience, with a most visible hand of God upon them. So that what now came to pass might very fitly be compared to their hiding themselves in the dens and rocks of the mountains.

3. Heathenism now was in a great measure abolished throughout the Roman empire. Images were now destroyed, and Heathen temples pulled down. Images of gold and silver were melted down and coined into money. Some of the chief of their idols, which were curiously wrought, were brought to Constantinople, and there drawn with ropes up and down the streets for the people to behold and laugh at. The Heathen priests were dispersed and banished.

4. The Christian church was brought into a state of great peace and prosperity. Now all Heathen magistrates were put down, and only Christians were advanced to places of authority all over the empire. They had now Christian presidents, Christian governors, Christian judges and officers, instead of their old heathenish ones. Constantine set himself to put honour upon Christian bishops or ministers, and to build and adorn churches: and now large and beautiful Christian churches

were erected in all parts of the world instead of the old Heathen temples.

This revolution was the greatest change in the face of things that ever came to pass in the world since the flood.—Satan, the prince of darkness, that king and god of the Heathen world, was cast out. The roaring lion was conquered by the Lamb of God, in the strongest dominion that ever he had. This was a remarkable accomplishment of Jer. x. 11. "The gods that have not made the heaven and the earth, even they shall perish from the earth, and from under these heavens."—The chief part of the world was now brought utterly to cast off their old gods and their old religion, to which they had been accustomed much longer than any of their histories give an account of. They had been accustomed to worship the gods so long, that they knew not any beginning of it. It was formerly spoken of as a thing unknown for a nation to change their gods, Jer. ii. 10, 11; but now the greater part of the nations of the known world were brought to cast off all their former gods. That multitude of gods which they worshipped, were all forsaken. Thousands of them were cast away for the worship of the true God, and Christ the only Saviour: and there was a most remarkable fulfilment of Isa. ii. 17, 18. "And the loftiness of man shall be bowed down, and the haughtiness of men shall be made low: and the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day. And the idols he shall utterly abolish." And since that, those gods which were once so famous in the world, as Jupiter, and Saturn, and Minerva, and Juno, &c. are only heard of as things of old. They have had no temples, no altars, no worshippers, for many hundred years.

Now is come the end of the old Heathen world in its principal part, the Roman empire. And this great revolution, with that terrible destruction of the great men who had been persecutors, is compared, (Rev. vi.) to the end of the world, and Christ coming to judgment; and is most immediately signified under the sixth seal, which followed upon the souls under the altar crying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth? This vision of the sixth seal, by the general consent of expositors, has respect to this downfall of the Heathen Roman empire; though it has a more remote respect to the day of judgment, of which this was a type. The day of judgment cannot be what is immediately intended; because we have an account of many events which were to come to pass after those of the sixth seal.

What came to pass now is also represented by the devil's being cast out of heaven to the earth. In his great strength and glory, over that mighty Roman empire, he had exalted his throne up to heaven. But now he fell like lightning from hea-

ven, and his kingdom was confined to the meaner and more barbarous nations, or to the lower parts of the world. This is the event foretold, Rev. xii. 9, &c. "And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the devil and Satan, which receiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him," &c. Satan had formerly tempted Christ, and promised to give him the glory of the kingdoms of the world; but now he is obliged to give it to him even against his will. This was a glorious fulfilment of that promise which God made to his Son, Isa. liii. 12. "Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors, and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors." This was a great fulfilment of prophecies concerning the glorious time of the gospel, and particularly those of Daniel. Now it pleased the Lord God of heaven to set up a kingdom on the ruins of Satan's kingdom; and such honour does the Father put upon Christ for the disgrace he suffered when on earth.

From what has been said of the success of the gospel from Christ's ascension to the time of Constantine, we may deduce a strong argument for the truth of the Christian religion, and that the gospel of Jesus Christ is really from God. Particularly,

1. We may gather from what has been said, that it is the gospel, and that only, which has actually been the means of bringing the world to the knowledge of the true God. That those are no gods whom the Heathen worshipped, and that there is but one only God, is what, now since the gospel has so taught us, we can see to be truth by our own reason. It is plainly agreeable to the light of nature, and it can be easily shown by reason, to be reasonably true. The very Deists themselves acknowledge, that it can be demonstrated, that there is one God, and but one, who has made and governs the world. But now it is evident that it is the gospel, and that only, which has actually been the means of bringing men to the knowledge of this truth. It was not the instructions of philosophers; they tried in vain: *The world by wisdom knew not God.* Till the gospel and the holy scriptures came abroad, all the world lay in ignorance of the true God, and in the greatest darkness with respect to religion, embracing the absurdest opinions and practices, which all civilized nations now acknowledge to be childish fooleries. The light of nature, their own reason, and all the wisdom of learned men, signified nothing till the scriptures came. But when these came abroad, they were successful to bring the world to an acknowledgment of the one only true God, and to worship and serve him.

And hence it is, that all that part of the world which now acknowledges one only true God—Christians, Jews, Mahometans, and even Deists—originally came to own him. It is owing to this that they are not in general at this day left in heathenish darkness. They have it all, either immediately from the scriptures, or by tradition from their fathers, who had it first from the scriptures. And doubtless those who now despise the scriptures, and boast of the strength of their own reason, as being sufficient to lead into the knowledge of the one true God, if the gospel had never come abroad in the world to enlighten their forefathers, would have been as sottish and brutish idolaters as the world in general was before the gospel came abroad. The Mahometans, who own but one true God, at first borrowed the notion from the scriptures; for the first Mahometans had been educated in the Christian religion, and apostatized from it. And this is evident, that the scriptures were designed of God to be the proper means to bring the world to the knowledge of himself, rather than human reason, or any thing else. For it is unreasonable to suppose, that the gospel, and that only which God never designed as the proper mean for obtaining this effect, should actually obtain it; and that after human reason, which he designed as the proper mean, had been tried for a great many ages, without any effect. If the scriptures be not the word of God, then they are nothing but darkness and delusion, yea, the greatest delusion that ever was. Now, is it reasonable to suppose, that God in his providence would make use of falsehood and delusion, to bring the world to the knowledge of himself, and that no part of it should be brought to the knowledge of him any other way?

2. The gospel prevailing as it did against such powerful opposition, plainly shows the hand of God. The Roman government, that so violently set itself to hinder the success of the gospel, and to subdue the Church of Christ, was the most powerful that ever was in the world; and not only so, but they seemed to have the church in their hands. The Christians who were under their command, never took up arms to defend themselves; they armed themselves with nothing but patience, and such like spiritual weapons; and yet this mighty power could not conquer, but, on the contrary, Christianity conquered them. The Roman empire had subdued many mighty and potent kingdoms; they subdued the Grecian monarchy, though it made the utmost resistance; and yet they could not conquer the church, which was in their hands; but, on the contrary, were subdued, and finally triumphed over by the church.

3. No other sufficient cause can possibly be assigned for

this propagation of the gospel, but only God's own power. There was certainly some reason. Here was a great and wonderful effect; and this effect was not without some cause.—Now, what other cause can be devised but only the divine power? It was not the outward strength of the instruments which were employed in it. At first the gospel was preached only by a few fishermen, who were without power and worldly interest to support them. It was not their craft and policy that produced this wonderful effect; for they were poor illiterate men. It was not the agreeableness of the story they had to tell to the notions and principles of mankind. This was no pleasant fable: a crucified God and Saviour was to the Jews a stumbling-block, and to the Greeks foolishness. It was not the agreeableness of their doctrines to the dispositions of men; for nothing is more contrary to the corruptions of men than the pure doctrines of the gospel. This effect, therefore, can have proceeded from no other cause than the power and agency of God; and if the power of God was thus exercised to cause the gospel to prevail, then the gospel is his word; for surely God does not use his almighty power to promote a mere imposture and delusion.

4. This success is agreeable to what Christ and his apostles foretold. Matt. xvi. 18. "Upon this rock will I build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." John xii. 24. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground, and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." And ver. 31, 32. "Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out. And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me." John xvi. 8. "When he (the comforter) is come, he will reprove the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment,—because the prince of this world is judged."

So the apostle Paul, in 1 Cor. chap. i. 21—28, declares, how that after the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God, by the foolishness of preaching, to save them that believe; and that God chose the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are.——If any man foretells a thing, very likely in itself to come to pass, from causes which can be foreseen, it is no great argument of a revelation from God: but when a thing is foretold which is very unlikely ever to come to pass, is entirely contrary to the common course of things, and yet it does come to pass just agreeable to the prediction, this is a strong argument that the prediction was from God. Thus the consideration of the *manner* of the propaga-

tion and success of the gospel during the time which has been spoken of, affords great evidence that the scriptures are the word of God.

PART III.

The Success of Redemption from the Time of Constantine to the Rise of Antichrist.

I AM now to show how the success of Christ's redemption is carried on from the overthrow of the Heathen Roman empire in the time of Constantine the Great, till the rise of Antichrist. And in order to a more clear view of the great works of God in accomplishing the success of Christ's redemption, and our seeing the glory of them, it will be necessary, as in the foregoing periods, to consider not only the success itself, but the opposition made to it.

I. The *opposition.* Satan, the great red dragon, after so sore a conflict with Michael and his angels for the greater part of three hundred years, was at last entirely routed and vanquished; so that he was cast down, as it were, from heaven to the earth. Yet he does not give over his opposition to the woman, the church of Christ, concerning which all this conflict had been: but is still in a rage, renews his attempts, and has recourse to new devices against the church. The serpent, after he is cast out of heaven to the earth, casts out of his mouth water as a flood, to cause the woman to be carried away of the flood. The opposition that he made to the church of Christ before the rise of Antichrist, was principally of two sorts. It was either by corrupting the church of Christ with heresies, or by new endeavours to restore Paganism.

1. After the destruction of the Heathen Roman empire, Satan infested the church with *heresies.* Though there had been so glorious a work of God in delivering the church from her Heathen persecutors, and overthrowing the Heathen empire; yet the days of the church's travail not being ended, and the set time of her prosperity not being yet come, (as being what was to succeed the fall of Antichrist,) therefore the peace and prosperity which the church enjoyed in Constantine's time, was but very short. It was a respite, which gave the church a time of peace and silence, as it were, *for half an hour*, wherein the four angels held the four winds from blowing, till the servants of God should be sealed in their foreheads. But

the church soon began to be greatly infested with heresies; the two principal, and those which did most infest the church, were the Arian and Pelagian.

The *Arians* began soon after Constantine came to the throne. They denied the doctrine of the Trinity, the divinity of Christ and the Holy Ghost, and maintained, that they were but mere creatures. This heresy increased more and more in the church, and prevailed like a flood which threatened to overthrow all, and entirely to carry away the church, insomuch that before the close of the fourth century, the greater part of the Christian church were become Arians. Some emperors, the successors of Constantine, were Arians; so that being the prevailing party, and having the civil authority on their side, they raised a great persecution against the true church of Christ; so that this heresy might well be compared to a flood out of the mouth of the serpent, which threatened to overthrow all, and quite carry away the woman.

The *Pelagian* heresy arose in the beginning of the next century. It began by one PELAGIUS, who was born in Britain: his British name was MORGAN. He denied original sin and the influence of the Spirit of God in conversion, and held the power of free will, and many other things of like tendency; and this heresy did for awhile greatly infest the church. Pelagius's principal antagonist, who wrote in defence of the orthodox faith, was St. Augustin.

2. The other kind of opposition which Satan made against the church, was in his endeavours to restore *Paganism*. His first attempt was by Julian the apostate. Julian was nephew to Constantine the Great. When Constantine died, he left his empire to three sons; and after their death, Julian the apostate reigned in their stead. He had been a professed Christian, but he fell from Christianity, and turned Pagan; and therefore is called *the apostate*. When he came to the throne, he used his utmost endeavours to overthrow the Christian church, and set up Paganism again in the empire. He put down the Christian magistrates, and set up Heathens in their room. He rebuilt the Heathen temples, set up the Heathen worship, and became a most notorious persecutor of the Christians. He used to call Christ, by way of reproach, *the Galilean*. He was killed by a lance in his wars with the Persians. When he saw that he was mortally wounded, he took a handful of his blood, and threw it up towards heaven, crying out, "Thou hast overcome, O Galilean." He is commonly thought by divines to have committed the unpardonable sin.

Another way that Satan attempted to restore Paganism in the Roman empire, was by *the invasions and conquests of Heathen nations*. For in this space of time the Goths and

Vandals, and other barbarous nations from the north, invaded the empire, and obtained great conquests. They even overran the empire, and in the fifth century took the city of Rome, and finally conquered and took possession of the western half of the empire, and divided it amongst them. It was divided into ten kingdoms, with which began the ten horns of the beast; for we are told, that the ten horns are ten kings, who should rise in the latter part of the Roman empire: these are also represented by the ten toes of Nebuchadnezzar's image. The invasion and conquests of these Heathen nations are supposed to be foretold in the 8th chapter of Revelation, in what came to pass under the sounding of the four first trumpets. Now, by their means, Heathenism was again for awhile restored after it had been rooted out. So much for the opposition of Satan against the success of the gospel during this space before the rise of Antichrist. I proceed,

II. To show what *success* there was of the gospel in this space, notwithstanding this opposition.

1. I would observe, that the opposition of Satan in those things was baffled. Though the dragon cast out of his mouth such a flood after the woman to carry her away, yet he could not obtain his design; but the earth helped the woman, and opened her mouth, and swallowed up the flood which the dragon cast out of his mouth. These heresies, which for awhile so much prevailed, after awhile dwindled away, and orthodoxy was again restored.

2. The gospel, during this space of time, was further propagated amongst many barbarous nations in the confines of the Roman empire. In the time of Constantine there was a considerable propagation of the gospel in the East Indies, briefly by the ministry of one Frumentius. Great numbers of the Iberians were converted to Christianity by a Christian woman of eminent piety, whom they had taken captive. And some account is given of several other barbarous nations who were not within the Roman empire, that great numbers of them were brought to receive the gospel by the teaching and example of captives whom they had taken in war. About the year of Christ three hundred and seventy-two, the gospel was propagated among the barbarous inhabitants of Arabia; and among some of the northern nations: particularly a prince of the Goths about this time became Christian, and a great number of his people with him. Towards the latter part of this century, the gospel was also further propagated among the Persians; and also the Scythians, a barbarous people, whom the apostle mentions, Col. iii. 11. "Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free."

And after this, about the year four hundred and thirty, there was a remarkable conversion of *the Burgundians*, to the

Christian faith. Now the gospel began to be propagated in Ireland; and the Irish, who till now had been Heathen, began to receive the Christian faith. About the same time it was further propagated among some barbarous people in Scotland, and in some other places. In the next century, *Zathus*, a Heathen King, who ruled over the *Colchians*, was brought to renounce his Heathenism, and to embrace the Christian religion. Several other barbarous nations are recorded to have renounced Heathenism aud embraced Christianity about this time, that I cannot stand to mention.—Thus I have briefly considered the principal events of providence which concern the success of the gospel of Christ from Constantine to the rise of Antichrist.

PART IV.

The Success of Redemption from the Rise of Antichrist to the Reformation.

I COME now to the darkest and most dismal day that ever the Christian church saw, and probably the darkest that ever it will see; from the rise of Antichrist till the Reformation by Luther and others. The true church in this space was for many hundred years in a state of great obscurity; like the woman in the wilderness, she was almost hid from sight and observation. In speaking of the events of this space of time, I would,—1. Take notice of the great machinations and works of Satan against the kingdom of Christ;—2. How the church of Christ was upheld during this time.

I. I would take notice of the great machinations and works of Satan against the kingdom of Christ during this time. Satan had done great things against the Christian church before, but had been baffled once and again. Michael and his angels had obtained a glorious victory. How terrible was his opposition during the continuance of the Heathen empire; and how glorious was Christ's victory and triumph over him in the time of Constantine! It pleased God now to prepare the way for a yet more glorious victory over him; he is suffered to renew his strength, and to do the utmost that his power and subtilty can effect. He has a long time to lay his schemes, to establish his interest, and make his matters strong. God suffers him to carry his designs a great length indeed, almost to the swallowing

up of his church; and to exercise a high, proud, and almost uncontrolled dominion in the world, a long time before Christ finally conquers, and utterly ruins his visible kingdom. This he will do in the time of the destruction of Antichrist. thus gloriously triumphing over Satan, after he has done to the utmost of his power and subtilty; after he has lifted himself highest of all, and dealt most proudly.

The two great works of the devil, in this space of time, against the kingdom of Christ, are his creating his Antichristian and Mahometan kingdoms; which both together comprehend the ancient Roman empire; the kingdom of Antichrist the Western, and the Mahometan kingdom the Eastern empire. As the scriptures in the book of Revelation represent it, it is in the destruction of these that the glorious victory of Christ, at the introduction of the glorious times of the church, will mainly consist. And here let us briefly observe how Satan erects and maintains these two great kingdoms of his in opposition to the kingdom of Christ.

1. With respect to the kingdom of *Antichrist.* This seems to be the masterpiece of all the contrivances of the devil against the kingdom of Christ, and is evidently so spoken of in scripture. Antichrist is *that* man of sin, (2 Thess. ii. 3.) emphatically, as though he were so eminently. He is called *Antichrist*, which signifies the opponent or adversary of Christ, not because he is the *only* opponent of Christ; for the apostle John observes, that in his days there were *many* Antichrists. But yet this is called *the Antichrist*, as though there were none but he, because he was so eminently, and above all others. So this contrivance of the devil, is called *the mystery of iniquity*, 2 Thess. ii. 7. We find no enemy of Christ one half so much spoken of in the prophecies of Revelation as this; and the destruction of no enemy is spoken of as so glorious, and so happy for the church.

This is a contrivance to turn the ministry of the Christian church into a ministry of the devil, and the angels of the churches into fallen angels. In the tyranny, superstition, idolatry, and persecution, which he sets up, he contrives to make an image of ancient Paganism, and more than to restore what was lost by the overthrow of Paganism in the time of Constantine. By these means, the head of the beast, which was wounded unto death in Constantine, has his deadly wound healed in Antichrist, Rev. xiii. 3. And the dragon, that formerly reigned in the Heathen Roman empire, being cast out thence, after the beast with seven heads and ten horns rises up out of the sea, gives him his power, and seat, and great authority; and all the world wonders after the beast.

I am far from pretending to determine the time when the reign of Antichrist began, which is a point that has been so

much controverted among divines and expositors. It is certain that the twelve hundred and sixty days, or years, which are so often in scripture mentioned as the time of the continuance of Antichrist's reign, did not commence before the year of Christ four hundred and seventy-nine; because if they did, they would have ended, and Antichrist would have fallen before now. The rise of Antichrist was gradual. The Christian church corrupted itself in many things presently after Constantine's time; growing more and more superstitious in its worship, and by degrees bringing in many ceremonies into the worship of God, till at length they brought in the worship of saints, and set up images in their churches. The clergy in general, and especially the bishop of Rome, assumed more and more authority to himself. In the primitive times, he was only a minister of a congregation; then a standing moderator of a presbytery; then a diocesan bishop; then a metropolitan, which is equivalent to an archbishop; then a patriarch. Afterwards he claimed the power of universal bishop over the whole Christian church; wherein he was opposed for awhile, but afterwards was confirmed in it by the civil power of the Emperor in the year six hundred and six. After that he claimed the power of a temporal prince, and so was wont to carry two swords, to signify that both the temporal and spiritual sword was his. He claimed more and more authority, till at length, as Christ's vicegerent on earth, he claimed the very same power that Christ would have done, if he was present on earth reigning on his throne; or the same power that belongs to God, and was used to be called *God on earth;* to be submitted to by all the princes of Christendom. He claimed power to crown princes, and to degrade them at his pleasure; and this power was owned: yea, kings and emperors used to kiss his feet. The emperors received their crowns at his hands; and princes were wont to dread the displeasure of the Pope, as they would dread a thunderbolt from heaven. If the Pope was pleased to excommunicate a prince, all his subjects were at once freed from their allegiance to him; and obliged not to own him any more, on pain of excommunication: and not only so, but any man might kill him wherever he found him. Further, the Pope was believed to have power to damn men at pleasure; for whoever died under his excommunication, was looked upon as certainly damned. Several emperors were actually deposed, and ejected, and died miserably by his means; and if the people of any state or kingdom did not please him, he had power to lay that state or kingdom under an interdict, which was a sentence pronounced by the Pope against that state or kingdom, whereby all sacred administrations among them could have no validity. There could be no valid baptisms, or sacraments, or prayers, or preaching, or pardons, till that

interdict was taken off; so that that people remained, in their apprehension, in a miserable, damnable state, and therefore dreaded it as they would a storm of fire and brimstone from heaven. And in order to execute his wrath on a prince or people with whom he was displeased, other princes must also be put to a great deal of trouble and expence.

And as the Pope and his clergy robbed the people of their ecclesiastical and civil liberties and privileges, so they also robbed them of their estates, drained all Christendom of their money. They engrossed most of their riches into their own coffers, by vast revenues, besides pay for pardons and indulgences, baptisms and extreme unctions, deliverance out of purgatory, and a hundred other things.——See how well this agrees with the prophecies, 2 Thess. ii. 3, 4. Dan. vii. 20, 21. Rev. xiii. 6, 7. and chap. xvii. 3, 4.

During this time also superstition and ignorance more and more prevailed. The holy scriptures by degrees were taken out of the hands of the laity, the better to promote the unscriptural and wicked designs of the Pope and the clergy; and instead of promoting knowledge among the people, they industriously promoted ignorance. It was a received maxim among them, That ignorance is the mother of devotion: and so great was the darkness of those times, that learning was almost extinct in the world. The very priests themselves, most of them, were barbarously ignorant as to any commendable learning, or any other knowledge, than their hellish craft in oppressing and tyrannizing over the souls of the people.—The superstition and wickedness of the church of Rome, kept growing worse and worse till the very time of the Reformation, and the whole Christian world were led away into this great defection, excepting the remains of the Christian church in the Eastern empire, that had not been utterly overthrown by the Turks. The Greek church, and some others were also sunk into great darkness and gross superstition, excepting also those few that were the people of God, who are represented by the woman in the wilderness, and God's two witnesses, of which more hereafter.——This is one of those two great kingdoms which the devil in this period erected in opposition to the kingdom of Christ, and was the greatest and chief.

2. The Mahometan kingdom is another of mighty power and vast extent, set up by Satan against the kingdom of Christ. He set this up in the Eastern empire, as he did that of Antichrist in the Western.

Mahomet was born in the year of Christ five hundred and seventy, in Arabia. When he was about forty years of age, he began to boast that he was the great prophet of God; and proceeded to teach his new-invented religion, of which he was

to be worshipped as the head next under God. He published his Alcoran, which he pretended he received from the angel Gabriel; and being a subtle crafty man, possessed of considerable wealth, and living among a people who were very ignorant, and greatly divided in their opinions on religious matters, he by subtilty and fair promises of a sensual paradise, gained a number to be his followers. He set up for their prince, and propagated his religion by the sword, and made it meritorious of paradise to fight for him. By such means his party grew, and went on fighting till they conquered and brought over the neighbouring countries; and so his party gradually increased till they over-ran a great part of the world. First, the Saracens were some of his followers, who were a people of Arabia, where Mahomet lived, and who about the year seven hundred, dreadfully wasted the Roman empire.—They over-ran a great many countries belonging to the empire, and continued their conquests for a long time. These are supposed to be meant by the locusts mentioned in the 9th chapter of Revelation.

And then the Turks, who were originally different from the Saracens, became followers of Mahomet, and conquered all the Eastern empire. They began their empire about the year of Christ twelve hundred and ninety-six; began to invade Europe in the year thirteen hundred; took Constantinople, and so became masters of all the Eastern empire, in the year fourteen hundred and fifty-three. And thus all the cities and countries where stood those famous churches of which we read in the New Testament, as Jerusalem, Antioch, Ephesus, Corinth, &c. now became subject to the Turks. These are supposed to be prophesied of by the horsemen in the 9th chapter of Revelation, beginning with the 15th verse. And the remains of the Christians in those parts of the world, who are mostly of the Greek church, are in miserable slavery under these Turks; are treated with a great deal of barbarity and cruelty, and are become mostly very ignorant and superstitious.

Thus I have shown what great works of Satan were wrought during this space of time in opposition to the kingdom of Christ.

II. I come now to show how the church of Christ was upheld through this dark time.

1. It is to be observed, that towards the former part of this space of time, some of the nations of Christendom held out a long time before they complied with the corruptions and usurpations of the church of Rome. Though all the world wondered after the beast, yet all nations did not fall in at once. Many of the principal corruptions of the church of Rome were brought in with a great deal of struggle and opposition:

and particularly, when the Pope gave out, that he was universal bishop, many churches greatly opposed him in it; and it was a long time before they would yield to his exorbitant claims. And so, when the worship of images was first brought into the churches, there were many who greatly opposed it, and long held out against it. And so with respect to other corruptions of the church of Rome. Those who dwelt nearer to the city of Rome complied sooner; but some that were more remote, were a long time before they could be induced to put their necks under the yoke: and particularly a great part of the churches in England, Scotland, and France, retained the ancient purity of doctrine and worship much longer than many others who were nearer the chief seat of Antichrist.

2. In every age of this dark time, there appeared particular persons in all parts of Christendom, who bore a testimony against the corruptions and tyranny of the church of Rome. There is no one age of Antichrist, even in the darkest times, but ecclesiastical historians mention many by name who manifested an abhorrence of the Pope, and his idolatrous worship, and pleaded for the ancient purity of doctrine and worship. God was pleased to maintain an uninterrupted succession of many witnesses through the whole time, in Germany, France, Britain, and other countries; private persons and ministers, some magistrates and persons of great distinction.—And there were numbers in every age who were persecuted and put to death for this testimony.

3. Besides these particular persons dispersed, there was a certain people called the *Waldenses*, who lived separate from all the rest of the world, and constantly bore a testimony against the church of Rome through all this dark time. The place where they dwelt was the Vaudois, or the five valleys of Piedmont, a very mountainous country, between Italy and France; it was compassed about with those exceeding high mountains, *the Alps*, which were almost impassible, and therefore the valleys were almost inaccessible. There this people lived for many ages, in a state of separation from all the world, having very little to do with any other people. And there they served God in the ancient purity of his worship, and never submitted to the church of Rome. This probably was the place especially meant in the 12th chapter of Revelations, 6th verse, as prepared of God for the woman, that they should feed her there during the reign of Antichrist.

Some of the Popish writers themselves own, that this people never submitted to the church of Rome. One of the Popish writers, speaking of the Waldenses, says, The heresy of the Waldenses is the oldest heresy in the world. It is supposed that they first betook themselves to this place among the mountains, to hide themselves from the severity of the Heathen

persecutions which existed before Constantine the Great. And thus the woman fled into the wilderness from the face of the serpent. Rev. xii. 6, 14. "And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place: where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent." The people being settled there, their posterity continued from age to age: and being, as it were, by natural walls, as well as by God's grace, separated from the rest of the world, they never partook of the overflowing corruption.

These especially were those virgins who were not defiled, when other churches prostituted themselves; but they kept themselves pure for Christ alone. They followed the lamb, their spiritual husband, whithersoever he went: they followed him into this hideous wilderness, Rev. xiv. 4, 5.——Their doctrine and worship appear to be the same with the Protestant doctrine and worship; and by the confession of Popish writers, they were a people remarkable for the strictness of their lives, for charity and other Christian virtues. They lived in external poverty in this hideous country; but they chose this rather than comply with the great corruptions of the rest of the world.

Living in so secret a place, it was a long time before they were noticed. But at last, falling under observation, the Romanists went out in mighty armies against them, fell upon them with insatiable cruelty, barbarously massacreing, and putting to death men, women, and children, with all imaginable tortures. Their enemies continued persecuting them with but little intermission for several hundred years; by which means many were driven out of the valleys of Piedmont. These fled into all parts of Europe, carrying with them their doctrine, to which many were brought over. Their persecutors could not by all their cruelties extirpate the church of God; so fulfilling his word, "that the gates of hell should not prevail against it."

4. Towards the latter part of this dark time, several noted divines openly appeared to defend the truth, and bear testimony against the corruptions of the church of Rome.—The first and principal of these was a certain English divine, *John Wickliff*, who appeared about one hundred and forty years before the Reformation; he strenuously opposed the Popish religion, taught the same doctrine that the Reformers afterwards did, and had many followers in England. He was hotly persecuted in his lifetime, yet died in peace; but after he was buried, his bones were dug up by his persecutors, and burnt. His followers remained in considerable numbers in England till the Reformation; they were cruelly persecuted, and multitudes were put to death for their religion.

Wickliff had many disciples, not only in England, but in

other parts of Europe, whither his books were carried; and particularly in Bohemia, among whom were two eminent divines, *John Huss* and *Jerom*, a divine of Prague, the chief city of Bohemia. These strenuously opposed the church of Rome, and had many who adhered to them. They were both burnt by the Papists for their doctrine; and their followers in Bohemia were cruelly persecuted, but never extirpated till the Reformation.

PART V.

The Success of Redemption from the Reformation to the present Time.

Thus having gone through the dark time of the church, I come now to consider that part which begins with the Reformation, and reaches to the present time. And here I would, 1. Speak of the Reformation itself; 2. The opposition which the devil has made to the Reformed church; 3. What success there has lately been of the gospel in one place and another; 4. What the state of things is now in the world with regard to the church of Christ, and the success of his purchase.

I. The first thing to be taken notice of is the *Reformation itself.* This was begun in Germany, about the year fifteen hundred and fifteen, by the preaching of Martin Luther, who being stirred in his spirit to see the horrid practices of the Popish clergy—and having set himself diligently to enquire after truth by the study of the holy scriptures, and the writings of the ancient fathers of the church—very openly and boldly decried the corruptions and usurpations of the Romish church in his preaching and writings. He had soon a great number who fell in with him; among whom was the Elector of Saxony, the sovereign prince of the country to which he belonged. This greatly alarmed the church of Rome; it rallied all its force to oppose him and his doctrine, and fierce wars and persecutions were raised against it. But yet it went on by the labours of Luther and Melancthon in Germany, Zuinglius in Switzerland, and other eminent divines, who were cotemporary with Luther; particularly Calvin, who appeared after the beginning of the Reformation, but was one of the most eminent Reformers.

Many of the princes of Germany soon fell in with the Reformed religion, and many other states and kingdoms in Europe, as England, Scotland, Sweden, Denmark, Norway, great

part of France, Poland, Lithuania, Switzerland, and the Low Countries. So that it is thought, that heretofore about half Christendom were of the Protestant religion; though since, the Papists have gained ground: so that the Protestants now have not so great a proportion.

Thus God began gloriously to revive his church again, and advance the kingdom of his Son; after such a dismal night of darkness from the rise of Antichrist to that time. There had been many endeavours used by the witnesses for the truth for a reformation before. But now when God's appointed time was come, his work went on with a swift and wonderful progress; and Antichrist, who had been rising higher and higher from his beginning till that time, was swiftly and suddenly brought down; he fell half-way towards utter ruin, and never has been able to rise again to his former height. A certain late expositor (Mr. Lowman,) who explains the five first vials in the 16th chapter of Revelation with greater probability perhaps than any who went before him, explains the fifth vial, which was poured out on the seat of the beast, of what came to pass in the Reformation; having explained the four preceding vials of certain great judgments which God brought on the Popish dominions before the Reformation. It is said, Rev. xvi. 10, that "the fifth angel poured out his vial on the seat of the beast;" in the original, it is *the throne of the beast;* "and his kingdom was full of darkness, and they gnawed their tongues for pain, and blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores, and repented not of their deeds." He poured out his vial upon the throne of the beast, *i. e.* on the authority and dominion of the Pope: so the word *throne* is often used in scripture; so 1 Kings i. 37. "As the Lord hath been with my lord the king, even so be he with Solomon, and make his throne greater than the throne of my lord King David;" *i. e.* make his dominion and authority greater, and his kingdom more glorious.

But now, in the Reformation, the vials of God's wrath were poured out on the throne of the beast, till it was terribly shaken and diminished. The Pope's authority and dominion was so greatly diminished, both as to extent and degree, that he lost about half his dominions; besides that authority, even in Popish dominions, which he had before. He is not regarded, and his power is dreaded in no measure as it was wont to be. The powers of Europe have learned not to put their necks under the Pope's feet. He is as a lion that has lost his teeth, in comparison of what he was once. And when the Pope and his clergy, enraged to see their authority so diminished at the Reformation, laid their heads together, and joined their forces to destroy the Reformation; their policy, which was wont to serve them so well, failed. They found their kingdom full of

darkness, so that they could do nothing, any more than the Egyptians, who rose not from their seats for three days. The Reformed church was defended as Lot and the angels were in Sodom, by smiting the Sodomites with darkness or blindness, so that they could not find the door. God then fulfilled that in Job v. 11, &c. "To set up on high those that be low; that those which mourn may be exalted to safety. He disappointeth the devices of the crafty, so that their hands cannot perform their enterprize. He taketh the wise in their own craftiness; and the counsel of the froward is carried headlong. They meet with darkness in the day-time, and grope in the noon-day as in the night. But he saveth the poor from the sword, from their mouth, and from the hand of the mighty."—Those proud enemies of God's people being so disappointed, and finding themselves so unable to uphold their own dominion and authority, were made as it were to gnaw their tongues for pain, or to bite them for mere rage.

II. I proceed to show what *opposition* has been made by Satan and his adherents, to this success of Christ's purchase by the Reformation; observing as we go along, how far they have been baffled, and how far they have been successful.

The opposition which Satan has made against the Reformed religion has been principally of the following kinds, *viz.* that which was made, 1. by a general council of the church of Rome; 2. by secret plots and devices; 3. by open wars and invasions; 4. by cruel oppression and persecution; and, 5. by bringing in corrupt opinions.

1. The first opposition that I shall notice is that which was made by the clergy of the church of Rome in a *general council.* This was the famous council of Trent, which the Pope called a little while after the Reformation. In that council, there met together six cardinals, thirty-two archbishops, two hundred and twenty-eight bishops, besides innumerable others of the Romish clergy. This council, in all their sittings, including the times of intermission, was held for twenty-five years together. Their main business all this while was to concert measures for establishing the church of Rome against the Reformers, and for destroying the Reformation. But it proved that they were not able to perform their enterprize. The Reformed church, notwithstanding their great counsel, remained, and still remains. So that the counsel of the froward is carried headlong; their kingdom is full of darkness, and they weary themselves to find the door.

Thus the church of Rome, instead of repenting of their deeds, when such clear light was held forth to them by Luther and other servants of God, persisted, by general agreement in council, in their vile corruptions and wickedness, and obstinate opposition to the kingdom of Christ. The doctrines and

practices of the church of Rome, which were chiefly condemned by the Reformed, were confirmed by the decrees of their council; and the corruptions in many respects, were carried higher than ever before. They uttered blasphemous reproaches and curses against the Reformed religion, and all the Reformed church was excommunicated and anathematized by them. According to the prophecy, *they blasphemed God.* Thus God hardened their hearts, [*i. e.* left them to do so,] intending to destroy them.

2. The Papists have often endeavoured to overthrow the Reformation by *secret plots* and conspiracies. There were many plots against the life of Luther. The Papists were contriving to dispatch him out of their way; and he, being a very bold man, often very much exposed himself in the cause of Christ; but yet they were wonderfully prevented from hurting him, and he at last died in his bed in peace. There have been innumerable schemes secretly laid for the overthrow of the protestant religion; one of the most considerable, and which seemed to be the most likely to have taken effect, was that in the time of King James II. of England. There was at that time a strong conspiracy between the King of England and Lewis XIV. of France, who were both Papists, to extirpate the Northern heresy, as they called the Protestant religion, not only out of England, but out of all Europe; and they had laid their schemes so, that they seemed to be almost sure of their purpose. They looked upon it, that if the Reformed religion were suppressed in the British realms and in the Netherlands, which were the strongest part, and chief defence of the Protestant interest, they should have easy work with the rest. And just as their matters seemed to be come to a head, and their enterprize ripe for execution, God in his providence, suddenly dashed all their schemes in pieces by the Revolution, at the coming in of King William and Queen Mary; by which all their designs were at an end. Now the Protestant interest was more strongly established, by the crown of England being transferred to the Protestant house of Hanover, and a Papist being, by the constitution of the nation, for ever rendered incapable of wearing the crown of England. Thus they groped in darkness at noonday as in the night, and their hands could not perform their enterprize, and their kingdom was full of darkness, and they gnawed their tongues for pain.

After this, there was a deep design laid to bring the same thing to pass in the latter end of Queen Anne's reign, by the bringing in of the Popish pretender; which was no less suddenly and totally baffled by divine Providence; as all the plots against the Reformation by bringing in the pretender have been.

3. The Reformation has often been opposed by *open wars*

and invasions. The Emperor of Germany declared war with the Duke of Saxony, and the principal men who favoured and received Luther's doctrine. But they could not obtain their end; they could not suppress the Reformation. For the same end, some time after, the King of Spain maintained a long war with Holland and the Low Countries. But those cruel wars issued greatly to the disadvantage of the Romish church, as they occasioned the setting up of one of the most powerful Protestant states in Europe. The design of the Spanish invasion of England in Queen Elizabeth's time, was to suppress and root out the Reformed religion; and therefore they brought in their fleet all manner of instruments of cruelty wherewith to torture the Protestants who would not renounce the Protestant religion. But their design was totally baffled, and their mighty fleet in a great measure ruined.

4. Satan has opposed the Reformation with *cruel persecutions.* The persecutions with which the Protestants have been harassed by the church of Rome, have in many respects been far beyond any of the Heathen persecutions. So that Antichrist has proved the greatest and most cruel enemy to the church of Christ that ever was in the world, in this, as well as in all other respects; agreeable to the description given of the church of Rome, Rev. xvii. "And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus." And, chap. xviii. 24. "And in her was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all them that were slain upon the earth."

The Heathen persecutions had been very dreadful; but now persecution by the church of Rome was improved, and studied, and cultivated, as an art or science. Such ways of afflicting and tormenting were found out, as are beyond the invention of ordinary men, or men unstudied in those things; and beyond the invention of all former ages. And that persecution might be managed the more effectually, there were certain societies of men established in various parts of the Popish dominions, whose business it should be to study, and improve, and practise persecution in its highest perfection, viz. *the courts of inquisition.* The particular histories of the Romish persecution, and their courts of inquisition, will give that idea which a few words cannot express.

When the Reformation began, the beast with seven heads and ten horns began to rage in a dreadful manner. The church of Rome renewed its persecution of the poor Waldenses, and great multitudes of them were cruelly tortured and put to death. Soon after the Reformation, there were terrible persecutions in various parts of Germany; and especially in Bohemia, which lasted for thirty years together; in which so much blood was shed for the sake of religion, that a certain

writer compares it to the plenty of waters of the great rivers of Germany. The countries of Poland, Lithuania, and Hungary, were in like manner deluged with Protestant blood.

By means of these and other cruel persecutions, the Protestant religion was in a great measure suppressed in Bohemia, the Palatinate, and Hungary, which before were Protestant countries. Thus was fulfilled what was foretold of the little horn, Dan. vii. 20, 21. "— and of the ten horns that were in his head, and of the other which came up, and before whom three fell, even of that horn that had eyes, and a mouth that spake very great things, whose look was more stout than his fellows. I beheld, and the same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them." And what was foretold of the beast having seven heads and ten horns, Rev. xiii. 7. "And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them; and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations."

Holland and the other Low Countries were for many years a scene of nothing but the most affecting and amazing cruelties, being deluged with the blood of Protestants, under the merciless hands of the Spaniards, to whom they were then in subjection. But in this persecution, the devil in a great measure failed of his purpose; as it issued in a great part of the Netherlands casting off the Spanish yoke, and setting up a wealthy and powerful Protestant state, to the great defence of the Protestant cause ever since.

France also is another country, which, since the Reformation, in some respects, perhaps more than any other, has been a scene of dreadful cruelties suffered by the Protestants. After many cruelties had been exercised toward the Protestants in that kingdom, there was begun a persecution of them in the year fifteen hundred and seventy-one, in the reign of Charles IX. king of France. It began with a cruel massacre, wherein seventy thousand Protestants were slain in a few days, as the king boasted; and in all this persecution, he slew, as is supposed, three hundred thousand martyrs. And it is reckoned, that about this time, within thirty years, there were martyred in this kingdom, for the Protestant religion, thirty-nine princes, one hundred and forty-eight counts, two hundred and thirty-four barons, one hundred and forty-seven thousand five hundred and eighteen gentlemen, and seven hundred and sixty thousand common people.

But all these persecutions were, for exquisite cruelty, far exceeded by those which followed in the reign of Lewis XIV. which indeed are supposed to exceed all others; and being long continued, by reason of the long reign of that king, they almost wholly extirpated the Protestant religion out of that kingdom, where had flourished a multitude of famous Pro-

testant churches. Thus it was given to the beast to make war with the saints, and to overcome them.

There was also a terrible persecution in England in Queen Mary's time, wherein great numbers in all parts of the kingdom were burnt alive. And after this, though the Protestant religion has been for the most part established by law in England, yet there have been very severe persecutions by the high churchmen, who symbolize in many things with the Papists. Such was that which occasioned our forefathers to flee from their native country, and to come and settle in this land, which was then a hideous howling wilderness. And these persecutions were continued with little intermission till King William came to the throne.

Scotland has also been the scene, for many years together, of cruelties and blood by the hands of high churchmen, such as came very little short of the Popish persecution in Queen Mary's days, and in many things much exceeded it, which continued till they were delivered by King William.

Ireland also has been, as it were, overwhelmed with Protestant blood. In the days of King Charles I. of England, above two hundred thousand Protestants were cruelly murdered in that kingdom in a few days; the Papists, by a secret agreement, rising at an appointed time, intending to kill every Protestant in the kingdom at once.

Besides these, there have been very cruel persecutions in Italy and Spain, and other places, which I shall not stand to relate.—Thus did the devil, and his great minister, Antichrist, rage with such violence and cruelty against the church of Christ! and thus did the whore of Babylon make herself drunk with blood of the saints and martyrs of Jesus! By these persecutions the Protestant church has been much diminished! Yet have they not been able to prevail; but still the Protestant church is upheld, and Christ fulfils his promise, that *the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.*

5. The last kind of opposition that Satan has made to the Reformation is by *corrupt opinions.* The first opposition of this kind was by the sect of the *Anabaptists*, which began about four or five years after the Reformation itself. This sect, as it first appeared in Germany, were vastly more extravagant than the present Anabaptists are in England. They held a great many exceeding corrupt opinions. One tenet of theirs was, That there ought to be no civil authority, and that it was lawful to rebel against it. And on this principle they refused to submit to magistrates, or any human laws; and gathered together in vast armies, to defend themselves against their civil rulers and put all Germany into an uproar, and so kept it for some time.

The next opposition of this kind to the Reformation was that which was made by *enthusiasts*. Those are called enthusiasts who falsely pretend to be inspired by the Holy Ghost, as the prophets were. These began in Germany about ten years after Luther began the Reformation; and there arose various sects of them, who were exceeding wild and extravagant. The followers of these are the Quakers in England, and other parts of the British dominions.

The next of these were the *Socinians*, who had their beginning chiefly in Poland, by the teaching of *Lælius Socinus* and *Faustus Socinus*. They held, that Christ was a mere man, and denied Christ's satisfaction and most of the fundamental doctrines of the Christian religion. Their heresy has since been greatly propagated among Protestants in Poland, Germany, Holland, England, and other places.

After these arose the *Arminians*. They take their name from a Dutchman, whose name was *Jacobus Van Harmin*, which turned into Latin, is called *Jacobus Arminius;* and from his name the whole sect are called *Arminians*. This Jacobus Arminius was first a minister at Amsterdam, and then a professor of divinity in the university of Leyden. He had many followers in Holland. There was upon this a synod of all the reformed churches called together, who met at Dort in Holland. The synod of Dort condemned them; but yet they spread and prevailed. They began to prevail in England in the reign of Charles I. especially in the church of England. The church of England divines before that were almost universally Calvinists: but since that, Arminianism has gradually more and more prevailed, till they are become almost universally Arminians. And not only so, but Arminianism has greatly prevailed among the Dissenters, and has spread greatly in New-England, as well as Old.

Since this, *Arianism* has been revived. Arianism, a little after Constantine's time, almost swallowed up the Christian world, like a flood out of the mouth of the serpent which threatened to swallow up the woman. And of late years, this heresy has been revived in England, and greatly prevails there, both in the church of England, and among Dissenters. These hold, that Christ is but a mere creature, though they grant that he is the greatest of all creatures.

Another thing which has of late exceedingly prevailed among Protestants, and especially in England, is Deism. The Deists wholly cast off the Christian religion, and are professed infidels. Indeed they own the being of God, but deny any revealed religion, or any word of God at all; and say, that God has given mankind no other light to walk by but their own reason. With these opinions our nation, which is the

principal nation of the Reformation, is very much over-run, and they prevail more and more. Thus much concerning the opposition that Satan has made against the Reformation.

III. I proceed now to show what *success* the gospel has had in these later times of the Reformed church. This success may be reduced to three heads: 1. Reformation in doctrine and worship in countries called Christian; 2. Propagation of the gospel among the Heathen; 3. Revival of religion in the power and practice of it.

1. As to the first, *viz.* reformation in *doctrine*, the most considerable success of late has been in the empire of Muscovy, which is a country of vast extent. The people of this country, so many of them as call themselves Christians, professed to be of the Greek church; but were barbarously ignorant, and very superstitious, till of late years. Their late Emperor Peter the Great, set himself to reform his dominions, took great pains to bring them out of their darkness, and to have them instructed in religion. To that end, he set up schools of learning, ordered the Bible to be printed in the language of the country, made a law that every family should keep the holy scriptures in their houses, that every person should be able to read the same, and that no person should be allowed to marry till they were able to read the scriptures. He also reformed the churches of his country of many of their superstitions, whereby the religion professed and practised in Muscovy is much nearer to that of the Protestants than formerly it used to be. This emperor gave great encouragement to the exercise of the Protestant religion in his dominions. And since that, Muscovy is become a land of light, in comparison of what it was fifty years past.

2. As to the second kind of success which the gospel has lately had, *viz.* its *propagation* among the Heathen, I would take notice of three things.

(1.) The propagation of the gospel among the Heathen here in *America*. This American continent, which is a very great part of the world, and, together with its neighbouring seas adjoining, takes up one side of the globe, was wholly unknown to all Christian nations till these latter times. It was not known that there was any such part of the world, though it was very full of people; and therefore the devil had this part of the world as it were secure to himself, out of the reach of the light of the gospel, and so out of the way of molestation in his dominion over them. Here the many nations of Indians worshipped him as God from age to age, while the gospel was confined to the opposite side of the globe. It is probably supposed, from some remaining accounts, that the occasion of first peopling America was this: that the devil, being alarmed and surprised by the wonderful success of the

gospel the first three hundred years after Christ, and by the downfall of the Heathen empire in the time of Constantine—and seeing the gospel spread so fast, and fearing that his heathenish kingdom would be wholly overthrown through the world—led away a people from the other continent into America, that they might be quite out of the reach of the gospel, that here he might quietly possess them, and reign over them as their god.—Many writers intimate, that some of the Indian nations, when the Europeans first came into America, had a tradition among them, that their God first led them into this continent, and went before them in an ark.

However, it is certain that the devil did here quietly enjoy his dominion over the poor Indians for many ages. But in later times God has sent the gospel into these parts, and now the Christian church is set up here in New England, and in other parts of America, where before had been nothing but the grossest heathenish darkness. Great part of America is now full of Bibles, and full of at least the *form* of the worship of the true God and Jesus Christ, where the name of Christ before had not been heard of for many ages, if at all. And though there has been but a small propagation of the gospel among the Heathen here, in comparison of what were to be wished for; yet there has been something worthy of notice.—There was something remarkable in New England, both at first and of late, and in other parts of America, among many Indians, of an inclination to be instructed in the Christian religion.

However small the propagation of the gospel among the Heathen here in America has been hitherto; yet I think we may well look upon the discovery of so great a part of the world, and bringing the gospel into it, as one thing by which divine providence is preparing the way for the future glorious times of the church, when Satan's kingdom shall be overthrown throughout the whole habitable globe, on every side, and on all its continents. When those times come, then doubtless the gospel shall have glorious success, and all the inhabitants of this new-discovered world shall become subjects of the kingdom of Christ, as well as all the other ends of the earth. In all probability, providence has so ordered it, that the mariner's compass, (which is an invention of later times, whereby men are enabled to sail over the widest ocean, when before they durst not venture far from land,) should prove a preparation for what God intends to bring to pass in the glorious times of the church, *viz.* the sending forth the gospel wherever any of the children of men dwell, how far soever off, and however separated by wide oceans from those parts of the world which are already Christianized.

(2.) There has of late years been a very considerable pro-

pagation of the gospel among the Heathen in the dominions of *Muscovy*. I have already observed the reformation which has lately been among those who are called *Christians* there: but I now speak of the Heathen. Great part of the vast dominions of the Emperor of Muscovy are gross Heathens. The greater part of Great Tartary, a Heathen country, has in later times been brought under the Muscovite government; and there have been of late great numbers who have renounced their Heathenism, and have embraced the Christian religion.

(3.) There has been lately a very considerable propagation of the Christian religion among the Heathen in the *East Indies;* particularly, many in *Malabar* have been brought over to the Christian Protestant religion, chiefly by the labours of certain missionaries sent thither to instruct them by the King of Denmark, who have brought over many Heathens to the Christian faith, and have set up schools among them, and a printing press to print Bibles and other books for their instruction, in their own language, with great success.

3. The last kind of success which I shall notice, is the *revival* of the power and practice of religion. And here I shall take notice of but two instances.

(1.) There has been not long since a remarkable revival of the power and practice of religion in *Germany*, through the endeavours of an eminent divine there, *August Herman Frank*, professor of divinity at Halle in Saxony. Being a person of eminent charity, the great work that God wrought by him, began with his setting on foot a charitable design. It began only with his placing an alms-box at his study door, into which some poor mites were thrown, whereby books were bought for the instruction of the poor. And God was pleased so wonderfully to smile on his design, and so to pour out a spirit of charity on that occasion, that he was enabled in a little time to erect public schools for the instruction of poor children, and an orphan-house for their supply and instruction. At last, near five hundred children were maintained and instructed in learning and piety by the charity of others; and the number continued to increase more and more for many years. This was accompanied with a wonderful reformation and revival of religion, and a spirit of piety, in the city and university of Halle; and thus it continued. Which also had great influence in many other places in Germany. Their example seemed remarkably to stir up multitudes to their imitation.

(2.) Another thing, which it would be ungrateful in us not to notice, is that remarkable pouring out of the Spirit of God which has been of late in this part of *New England*, of which we, in this town, have had such a share. But it is needless for me particularly to describe it, seeing *you* have so

lately been eye-witnesses of it, and I hope multitudes are sensible of the benefit. Thus I have mentioned the more remarkable instances of the success which the gospel has lately had in the world.

IV. I proceed now to the last thing proposed to be considered, relating to the success of Christ's redemption during this space, *viz.* what is the *present state* of things now in the world, with regard to the church of Christ, and the success of his purchase. And this I would do, by showing how things are now, compared with the first times of the Reformation.—And, 1. I would show wherein the state of things is altered for the worse; and, 2. How it is altered for the better.

I. I would show wherein the state of things is altered from what it was in the beginning of the Reformation, for the *worse;* and it is so especially in these three respects.

(1.) The Reformed church is much *diminished.* The Reformation in former times, was supposed to take place through one half of Christendom, excepting the Greek church; or that there were as many Protestants as Papists. But now it is not so; the Protestant church is much diminished. Heretofore there have been multitudes of Protestants in *France;* many famous Protestant churches were planted all over that country, who used to meet together in synods, and maintain a very regular discipline. The Protestant church of France was a great part of the glory of the Reformation. But now it is far otherwise; this church is all broken and scattered, and there are now but very few protestant assemblies in all that kingdom. The Protestant interest is also greatly diminished in *Germany.* There were formerly several sovereign Protestant princes, whose successors are now Papists; as, particularly, the Elector Palatine, and the Elector of Saxony. The kingdom of *Bohemia* was formerly a Protestant kingdom, but is now in the hands of the Papists. *Hungary* was formerly a Protestant country; but the Protestants there have been greatly reduced, and in a great measure subdued, by persecutions. And the Protestant interest has no way of late remarkably gained ground of the church of Rome.

(2.) Another thing wherein the state of things is altered for the worse compared with the former times of the Reformation, is the prevailing of *licentiousness* in principles and opinions.—There is not now that spirit of orthodoxy which then prevailed; there is very little appearance of zeal for the mysterious and spiritual doctrines of Christianity; and they never were so held in contempt, as they are in the present age; and especially in England, the principal kingdom of the Reformation. In this kingdom, those principles on which the power of godliness depends, are in a great measure exploded, and Arianism, Socinianism, Arminianism, and Deism, prevail.

and carry almost all before them. History gives no account of any age wherein there was so great an infidel apostacy of those who had been brought up under the light of the gospel; never was there such a disavowal of all revealed religion; never any age wherein there was so much scoffing at and ridiculing the gospel of Christ by those who have been brought up under the gospel-light.

(3.) Another thing wherein things are altered for the worse is, that there is much less of the prevalency of the power of *godliness*, than there was at the beginning of the Reformation. A glorious out-pouring of the Spirit of God accompanied the first Reformation, not only to convert multitudes in so short a time from Popery to the true religion, but to turn many to God and true godliness. But now there is an exceeding great decay of vital piety; yea, it seems to be despised, called *enthusiasm*, and *fanaticism*. Those who are truly religious, are commonly looked upon to be beside their right mind; and vice and profaneness dreadfully prevail, like a flood which threatens to bear down all before it.——But I proceed now to show,

2. In what respects things are altered for the *better* from what they were in the first Reformation.

(1.) The power and influence of the *Pope* is much diminished. Although, since the former times of the Reformation, he has gained ground in extent of dominion; yet he has lost in degree of influence. The vial which in the beginning of the Reformation was poured out on the throne of the beast, to the great diminishing of his power and authority in the world, has continued running ever since. The Pope, soon after the Reformation, became less regarded by the princes of Europe than he had been before; and so he has been since less and less. Many of the Popish princes themselves seem now to regard him very little more than they think will serve their own designs; of which there have been several remarkable proofs and instances of late.

(2.) There is far less *persecution* now than there was in the first times of the Reformation. Some parts of the Protestant church are at this day under persecution, and so probably will be till the day of the church's suffering and travail is at an end, which will not be till the fall of Antichrist. But it is now in no measure as it was heretofore. There does not seem to be the same *spirit* of persecution prevailing; it is become more out of fashion even among the Popish princes. The wickedness of the enemies of Christ, and the opposition against his cause, seem to run in another channel. The humour now is to despise and *laugh* at all religion; and there seems to be a spirit of indifferency about it. However, so far the

state of things is better than it has been, that there is so much less of persecution.

3. There is a great increase of *learning*. In the dark times of Popery, before the Reformation, learning was so far decayed, that the world seemed to be over-run with barbarous ignorance. Their very priests were many of them grossly ignorant. Learning began to revive with the Reformation, owing very much to the art of printing, which was invented a little before this period. Since then, learning has increased more and more, and at this day is undoubtedly raised to a vastly greater height than ever it was before: and though no good use is made of it by the greater part of learned men, yet the increase of learning in itself is a thing to be rejoiced in, because it is a good, and, if duly applied, an excellent handmaid to divinity. It is a talent which, if God gives men a heart, affords them great advantage to do great things for the advancement of the kingdom of Christ, and the good of the souls of men. That learning and knowledge should greatly increase before the glorious times, seems to be foretold, Dan. xii. 4. "But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end: many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased." And however little now learning is applied to the advancement of religion; yet we may hope that the days are approaching wherein God will make great use of it for the advancement of the kingdom of Christ.

God in his providence now seems to be acting over again the same part which he did a little before Christ came. When Christ came into the world, learning greatly prevailed; and yet wickedness never prevailed more than then. God was pleased to suffer human learning to come to such a height before he sent forth the gospel into the world, that the world might see the insufficiency of all their own wisdom for the obtaining the knowledge of God, without the gospel of Christ, and the teaching of his Spirit. When, in the wisdom of God, the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God, by the foolishness of preaching, to save them that believe. And when the gospel came to prevail first without the help of man's wisdom, then God was pleased to make use of learning as an handmaid. So now, learning is at a great height in the world, far beyond what it was in the age when Christ appeared; and now the world, by their learning and wisdom, do not know God; and they seem to wander in darkness, are miserably deluded, stumble and fall in matters of religion, as in midnight-darkness. Trusting to their learning, they grope in the day-time as in the night. Learned men are exceedingly divided in their opinions concerning the matters

of religion, running into all manner of corrupt opinions, pernicious and foolish errors. They scorn to submit their reason to divine revelation, to believe any thing that is above their comprehension ; and so being wise in their own eyes, they become fools, and even vain in their imaginations; they turn the truth of God into a lie, and their foolish hearts are darkened. See Rom. i. 21, &c.

But yet, when God has sufficiently shown men the insufficiency of human wisdom and learning for the purposes of religion, and when the appointed time comes for that glorious outpouring of the Spirit of God, when he will himself by his own immediate influence enlighten men's minds ; then may we hope that God will make use of the great increase of learning as an handmaid to religion, as a means of the glorious advancement of the kingdom of his Son. Then shall human learning be subservient to the understanding of the scriptures, and to a clear explanation and a glorious defence of the doctrines of Christianity. And there is no doubt, that God in his providence has of late given the world the art of printing, and such a great increase of learning, to prepare for what he designs to accomplish for his church in the approaching days of its prosperity. And thus the wealth of the wicked is laid up for the just, Prov. xiii. 22.

PART VI.

Improvement of past Events.

Having now shown how the work of redemption has been carried on from the fall of man to the present time, before I proceed any further, I would make some Application.

I. From what has been said, we may see great evidence of the truth of the Christian religion, and that *the scriptures are the word of God.* There are three arguments of this, which may be drawn from what has been said.

1. It may be argued from that violent and inveterate *opposition* there has always appeared of the wickedness of the world against this religion. The religion that the church of God has professed from the first, has always been the same. Though the dispensations have been altered, yet the religion which the church has professed has always, as to its essentials, been the same. The church of God, from the beginning, has

been one society. The Christian church is manifestly the same society continued, that was before Christ came; grafted on the same root, built on the same foundation. The revelation on which both have depended, is essentially the same: for as the Christian church is built on the holy scriptures, so was the Jewish church. Though now the scriptures are enlarged by the addition of the New Testament, still it is essentially the same revelation with that which was given in the Old Testament, only the subjects of divine revelation are now more clearly revealed in the New Testament than they were in the Old. The sum of both the Old Testament and New, is Christ and his redemption. The ground-work of the religion of the church of God, both before and since Christ has appeared, is the same great scheme of redemption by the Son of God. The church that was before the Israelitish church, was still the same society, and it was essentially the same religion that was professed and practised in it. Thus it was from Noah to Abraham, and thus it was before the flood; for *this* also was built on the foundation of those revelations of Christ which were given to Adam, and Enoch. So that the church of God has always been built on those divine revelations, and were always essentially the same, and they are summarily comprehended in the holy scriptures. Ever since Moses' time the church has been built on the scriptures themselves.

So that the opposition which has been made to the church of God in all ages, has always been against the same religion, and the same revelation. Now therefore the violent and perpetual opposition that has ever been made by the corruption and wickedness of mankind against this church, is a strong argument of the truth of this religion, and this revelation, upon which this church has always been built. Contraries are well argued one from another. We may well and safely argue, that a thing is good, according to the degree of opposition in which it stands to evil, or the degree in which evil opposes it, and is an enemy to it. Now it is evident by the things which you have heard concerning the church of Christ, and that holy religion of Jesus Christ which it has professed, that the wickedness of the world has had a perpetual hatred to it, and has made most violent opposition against it.

That the church of God has always met with great opposition in the world, none can deny. This is plain by profane history as far as that reaches; and before that, divine history gives us the same account. The church of God, its religion and worship, began to be opposed in the time of Cain and Abel; and was so when the earth was filled with violence in Noah's time. After this, how was the church opposed in Egypt! and how was Israel always hated by the nations round about, agreeable to Jer. xii. 9. "Mine heritage is unto me as a

speckled bird, the birds round about are against her." And after the Babylonish captivity, how was this church persecuted by Antiochus Epiphanes and others! How was Christ persecuted when he was on earth! and how were the apostles and other Christians persecuted by the Jews, before the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans! How violent were that people against the church! and how dreadful was the opposition of the Heathen world against the Christian church after this before Constantine! How great was their spite against the true religion! And since that, how yet more violent, and spiteful, and cruel, has been the opposition of Antichrist against the church!

There is no other such instance of opposition. History gives no account of any other body of men that have been so hated, and so maliciously and insatiably pursued and persecuted, nor any thing like it. No other religion ever was so maligned age after age. The nations of other professions have enjoyed their religions in peace and quietness, however they have differed from their neighbours. One nation has worshipped one sort of gods, and others another, without molesting or disturbing one another about it. All the spite and opposition has been against this religion, which the church of Christ has professed. All other religions have seemed to show an implacable enmity to this; and men have seemed to have, from one age to another, such a spite against it, that they have seemed as though they could never satisfy their cruelty. They put their inventions upon the rack, to find out torments that should be cruel enough; and yet, after all, never seemed to be satisfied. Their thirst has never been satisfied with blood.

So that it is out of doubt, that this religion, and these scriptures, have always been malignantly opposed in the world. The only question that remains is, What it is that has made this opposition? whether or not it has been good or bad? whether it be the wickedness and corruption of the world, or not, that has done this? But of this there can be no greater doubt than that of the other, if we consider, how causeless this cruelty has always been, who the opposers have been, and the manner in which they have opposed. The opposition has chiefly been from Heathenism and Popery; which are the fruits of the blindness, corruption, and wickedness of men, as the very Deists themselves confess. The light of nature shows, that the religion of *Heathens*, consisting in the worship of idols, and sacrificing their children to them, and in obscene and abominable rites and ceremonies, is wickedness. And the superstitions, idolatries, and usurpations of the church of *Rome*, are no less contrary to the light of nature. By this appears, that this opposition which has been made against the

church of God, has been made by wicked men. And with regard to the opposition of the *Jews* in Christ's and the apostles' time, it was in a most corrupt time of that nation, when the people were generally become exceeding wicked, as some of the Jewish writers themselves, Josephus and others, who lived about that time, expressly declare. And that it has been mere wickedness that has made this opposition, is manifest from the *manner* of opposition; the extreme violence, injustice, and cruelty, with which the church of God has been treated. It seems to show the hand of malignant infernal spirits.

Now what reason can be assigned, why the corruption and wickedness of the world should so implacably set itself against this religion of Jesus Christ, and against the scriptures, but only that they are contrary to wickedness, and consequently are good and holy? Why should the enemies of Christ, for so many thousand years together, manifest such a mortal hatred of this religion, but only that it is the cause of God? If the scriptures be not the Word of God, and the religion of the church of Christ be not the true religion, then it must follow, that it is a most wicked religion; nothing but a pack of lies and abominable delusions, invented by the enemies of God. And if so, it is not likely that the enemies of God, and the wickedness of the world, would have maintained such a perpetual and implacable enmity against it.

2. It is a great argument that the Christian church and its religion is from God, that it has been *upheld* hitherto through all opposition and dangers. That the church of God and the true religion, which has been so continually and violently opposed, with so many endeavours to overthrow it—and which has so often been brought to the brink of ruin, through the greatest part of six thousand years—has yet been upheld, most remarkably shows the hand of God in favour of the church. If duly considered, it will appear one of the greatest wonders and miracles that ever came to pass. There is nothing like it upon the face of the earth. There is no other society of men that has stood as the church has. As to the old world before the flood, that was overthrown by a deluge of waters; but yet the church of God was preserved. Satan's visible kingdom on earth was then once entirely overthrown; but the visible kingdom of Christ never has been overthrown. All those ancient human kingdoms and monarchies of which we read, are long since come to an end; the Moabites, the Ammonites, the Edomites, &c. The great empire of proud Babylon was overthrown by the Persians; then the Persian empire was overthrown by the Greeks; after this the Grecian empire was overthrown by the Romans; and finally, the Roman empire fell a sacrifice to various barbarous nations. Here is a remarkable fulfilment of the text, *The moth has eaten them up like a*

garment, and the worm has eaten them like wool; but God's church remains."

Never were there so many and so potent endeavours to destroy any thing else, as there has been to destroy the church. Other kingdoms and societies of men, which have appeared to be ten times as strong as the church, have been destroyed with an hundredth part of the opposition which the church of God has met with: which shows, that it is God who has been its protector. For it is most plain, that it has not upheld itself by its own strength. For the most part, it has been a very weak society. The children of Israel were but a handful of people, in comparison of the many who often sought their overthrow. So in Christ's time, and in the beginning of the Christian church, they were but a remnant: whereas the whole multitude of the Jewish nation were against them. And so in the beginning of the Gentile church, they were but a small number in comparison with the heathen, who sought their overthrow. In the dark times of Antichrist, before the Reformation, they were but a handful; and yet their enemies could not overthrow them. And commonly, the enemies of the church have not only had the greatest number on their side, but they have had the strength in other respects. They have commonly had all the civil authority on their side. So in Egypt, the civil authority was for the Egyptians, and the church were only their slaves, and in their hands; and yet they could not overthrow them. And so it was in the time of Antiochus Epiphanes, and Julian the apostate, the authority was all on the side of the persecutors, and the church was under their dominion; yet all their cruelty could not extirpate it. And for a great many ages, the civil authority was all on the side of Antichrist, and the church seemed to be in their hands.

And not only has the strength of its enemies been greater than that of the church, but ordinarily the church has not used what strength they have had in their own defence, but have committed themselves wholly to God. In the time of the Jewish persecutions before the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans, and of the Heathen persecutions before Constantine, the Christians did not pretend to make any forcible resistance to their Heathen persecutors. So it has been for the most part under the Popish persecutions; and yet they have never been able to overthrow the church of God; but it stands to this very day.

And this is still the more exceeding wonderful, if we consider how often the church has been brought to the brink of ruin, and the case seemed to be desperate. In the time of the old world, when wickedness so prevailed as that but one family was left, yet God wonderfully appeared, and overthrew the wicked world with a flood, and preserved his church. At the

Red sea, when Pharaoh and his host thought they were quite sure of their prey, God appeared, destroyed them, and delivered his church. Under the tenth and last Heathen persecution, their persecutors boasted that now they had done the business for the Christians, and overthrown the Christian church; yet in the midst of their triumph, the Christian church rises out of the dust and prevails, and the Heathen empire totally falls before it. So when the Christian church seemed ready to be swallowed up by the Arian heresy, when Antichrist rose and prevailed, and all the world wondered after the beast; when the church for many hundred years was reduced to a small number, and the power of the world was engaged to destroy those little remnants; yet they could never fully accomplish their design, and at last God wonderfully revived his church by the Reformation, made it to stand as it were on its feet in the sight of its enemies, and raised it out of their reach. And when the Popish powers plotted the overthrow of the Reformed church, and seemed just about to bring their matters to a conclusion, then God wonderfully appeared for the deliverance of his church, as at the Revolution by King William. Presently after the darkest times, God has made his church most gloriously to flourish.

If such a preservation of the church of God, from the beginning of the world hitherto, attended with such circumstances, is not sufficient to show a divine hand in favour of it, what can be devised that would be sufficient? But if this be from the divine hand, then God owns the church, and owns that revelation and those scriptures on which she is built; and so it will follow, that their religion is the true religion, or God's religion, and that the scriptures, which they make their rule, are his word.

3. We may draw this further argument for the divine authority of the scriptures from what has been said, *viz.* that God has *fulfilled* those things which are foretold in the scriptures.—I have already observed in general, as I went along, how the prophecies of scripture were fulfilled: I shall now single out but *two instances* of the fulfilment of scripture-prophecy.

(1.) One is in *preserving* his church from being ruined. I have just now shown what an evidence this is of the divine authority of the scriptures in itself considered; I now speak of it as a fulfilment of scripture-prophecy. This is abundantly foretold and promised in the scriptures; particularly in the text. There it is foretold, that other things shall fail, other kingdoms and monarchies, which set themselves in opposition, should come to nothing: "The moth should eat them up like a garment, and the worm should eat them like wool." It is here foretold, that God's covenant-mercy to his church should

continue forever; and so it hath hitherto proved, though the church has passed through so many dangers. The same is promised, Isa. liv. 17. "No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment, thou shalt condemn." And again, Isa. xlix. 14, 15, 16. "But Zion said, The Lord hath forsaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me. Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? yea, they may forget, yet I will not forget thee. Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands, thy walls are continually before me." The same is promised in Isa. lix. 21. lxiii. 1, 2. and Zech. xii. 2, 3. So Christ promised the same, when he says, "On this rock will I build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Now if this be not from God, and the scriptures be not the word of God, and the church of Christ built on the foundation of this word be not of God, how could the persons who foretold this, know it? for if the church were not of God, it was a very unlikely thing ever to come to pass. For they foretold great opposition and dangers, that other kingdoms should come to nought, and that the church should often be almost swallowed up; and yet that the church should remain. Now how could they foresee so unlikely a thing but by divine inspiration?

(2.) The other remarkable instance is, the *fulfilment* of scripture-prophecy, concerning *Antichrist.* The way that this Antichrist should arise, is foretold, *viz.* by the falling away of the Christian church into a corrupt state: 2 Thess. ii. 3. "For that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition."——And it is prophesied, that this man of sin should set himself up in the temple or visible church of God, pretending to be vested with divine power, as head of the church, (ver. 4.) And all this is exactly come to pass in the church of Rome. Again it is intimated, that the rise of Antichrist should be *gradual*, (ver. 7.) "For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way." This also came to pass.——Again, it is prophesied of this mighty enemy of the Christian church, that he should be a great prince or monarch of the Roman empire: so he is represented in Daniel as a horn of the fourth beast, or fourth monarchy, as the angel himself explains it, (Daniel vii.) This also came to pass. ——Yea it is prophesied, that the seat of this pretended vicar of God, and head of the church, should be the city of Rome itself. It is said expressly, that the spiritual whore, or false church, should have her seat on seven mountains or hills: Rev. xvii. 9. "The seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth:" and (ver. 18.) "The woman which thou sawest, is that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the

earth;" which it is certain was at that time the city of Rome. This prophecy also has come to pass.

Further, it was prophesied, that this Antichrist should reign over peoples and multitudes, and nations, and tongues, Rev. xvii. 15; and that all the world should wonder after the beast, Rev. xiii. 3. This also was verified in the church of Rome. It was foretold that this Antichrist should be remarkable for the sin of pride, pretending to great things, and assuming very much to himself: (2 Thess. ii. 4.) "That he should exalt himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped." So Rev. xiii. 5. "And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things, and blasphemies." Dan. vii. 8, 20. the *little horn* is said to have *a mouth speaking very great things*, and his look to be *more stout than his fellows*. This also was verified in the Pope, and the church of Rome.——It was also prophesied, that Antichrist should be an exceeding cruel persecutor, Dan. vii. 21. The same horn "made war with the saints, and prevailed against them:" Rev. xiii. 7. "And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them." Rev. vii. 6. "And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus." This also came to pass in the church of Rome.—It was foretold, that Antichrist should excel in craft and policy: Dan. vii. 8. "In this horn were eyes like the eyes of a man." And ver. 20. "Even of that horn that had eyes." This also marks the church of Rome. ——It was foretold that the kings of Christendom should be subject to Antichrist; Rev. xvii. 12, 13. "And the ten horns which thou sawest, are ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet; but received power as kings one hour with the beast. These have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast." This also came to pass with respect to the Romish church. ——It was foretold, that he should perform pretended miracles and lying wonders: 2 Thess. ii. 9. "Whose coming is after the working of Satan, with all power, and signs, and lying wonders." Rev. xiii. 13, 14. "And he doth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth, in the sight of men, and deceiveth them that dwell on the earth, by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast." This also designates the church of Rome. Fire coming down from heaven seems to have reference to their excommunications, which were dreaded like fire from heaven.——It was foretold, that he should forbid to marry, and to abstain from meats: 1 Tim. iv. 3. "Forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving." This also is exatly fulfilled in the church of Rome. It was foretold, that he should be very rich, and arrive at a great degrce of earthly splendour and glory: Rev. xvii. 4. "And the woman was arrayed in purple, and scarlet colour, and decked

with gold and precious stones, and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand." And so chap. xviii. 7, 12, 13, 16. What can more expressly describe the church of Rome?—It was foretold, that he should forbid any to buy or sell, but those that had his mark: Rev. xiii. 17. "And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name." This also is fulfilled in the church of Rome.—It was foretold, that he should sell the souls of men, Rev. xviii. 13, where, in enumerating the articles of his merchandise, *the souls of men* are specifically mentioned as one. Is not this also exactly fulfilled in the same church?—It was foretold that Antichrist would not suffer the bodies of God's people to be buried: Rev. xi. 8, 9. "And their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the great city,—and they—shall not suffer their dead bodies to be put in graves." How literally has this come to pass with respect to the church of Rome!—I might mention many other things which were foretold of Antichrist, and show that they were fulfilled most exactly in the Pope and the church of Rome. How strong an argument is this, that the scriptures are the word of God!

II. From what has been said, we may learn what the spirit of true Christians is, viz. *a spirit of suffering.* Seeing God has so ordered it in his providence, that his church should for so long a time be in a suffering state, yea, often in a state of extreme suffering, we may conclude that the spirit of the true church is a suffering spirit, otherwise God never would have ordered for it so much suffering; for doubtless God accommodates the state and circumstances of the church to the spirit that he has given her. No wonder therefore that Christ so much inculcated upon his disciples, that "they must deny themselves, and take up their cross if they would follow him."

And what spirit has the church shown and exercised under her sufferings? She has actually, under those terrible persecutions through which she has passed, rather chosen to undergo those dreadful torments, and to sell all for the pearl of great price; to suffer all that her bitterest enemies could inflict, than to renounce Christ and his religion. History affords a great number of remarkable instances, sets in view a great cloud of witnesses. This abundantly confirms the necessity of possessing a spirit to sell all for Christ, to renounce our own case, our own worldly profit, our honour, and our all, for *him*, and for the gospel.

Let us inquire, whether we are of such a spirit. How does it prove upon trial? Does it prove in fact that we are willing to deny ourselves, and renounce our own worldly interest, and to pass through the trials to which we are called in providence? Alas, how small are our trials, compared with those of many

of our fellow Christians in former ages! and I would on this occasion apply that in Jer. xii. 5. "If thou hast run with the footmen and they have wearied thee, then how canst thou contend with horses?" If you have not been able to endure the light trials to which you have been called, how would you be able to endure the far greater trials to which the church has been called in former ages? Every true Christian has *the spirit of a martyr*, and would suffer as a martyr, if he were called to it in providence.

III. Hence we learn what great *reason* we have assuredly to expect the fulfilment of what yet *remains* to be fulfilled of things foretold in scripture. The scriptures foretell many great things yet to be fulfilled before the end of the world: but what great difficulties seem to be in the way? We seem at present to be very far from such a state as is foretold in the scriptures; but yet we have abundant reason to expect, that these things, however seemingly difficult, will be accomplished in their season. We see the faithfulness of God to his promises hitherto; how true he has been to his church, and how he has remembered his mercy from generation to generation. We may say concerning what God has done hitherto for his church, as Joshua said to the children of Israel, Joshua xxiii. 14. "That not one thing hath failed of all that the Lord our God hath spoken concerning his church;" but all things are hitherto come to pass agreeable to the divine prediction. This should strengthen our faith in those promises, and encourage us, and stir us up to earnest prayer to God for the accomplishment of the great and glorious things which yet remain to be fulfilled.

PART VII.

The Success of Redemption from the present Time to the Fall of Antichrist.

I COME now to show how the success of Christ's redemption will be carried on from the present time, till Antichrist is fallen, and Satan's visible kingdom on earth is destroyed.—With respect to this space of time, we have nothing to guide us but the prophecies of scripture. Through most of the time from the fall of man to the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans, we had scripture-history to guide us; and from thence to the present time we had prophecy, together with the

accomplishment of it in providence, as related in human histories. But henceforward we have *prophecy alone* to guide us. And here I would pass by those things that are only conjectured, or that are surmised by some from these prophecies which are doubtful in their interpretation, and shall insist only on those things which are more evident.

We know not what particular events are to come to pass before that glorious work of God's Spirit begins, by which Satan's kingdom is to be overthrown. By the consent of most divines, there are but few things, if any at all, foretold to be accomplished before the *beginning* of that glorious work of God. But some think that the slaying of the witnesses, (Rev. xi. 7, 8,) is not yet accomplished; and there is a difference of opinion with respect to the pouring out of the seven vials, (Rev. xvi.) how many are *already*, or how many *remain* to be poured out. A late expositor, indeed, whom I have before mentioned, seems to make it evident, that all are already poured out but two, *viz.* the *sixth* on the river Euphrates, and the *seventh* into the air. I will not now stand to inquire, what is intended by the pouring out of the sixth vial on the river Euphrates, that the way of the kings of the east may be prepared; but would only say, that it seems to be something *immediately preparatory* to the destruction of spiritual Babylon, as the drying up of the river Euphrates, which ran through the midst of old Babylon was what prepared the way of the kings of the Medes and Persians, (the kings of the east,) to come in under the walls, and destroy that city.

But whatever this be, it does not appear that it is any thing which shall be accomplished before that work of God's spirit is *begun*, by which, as it goes on, Satan's visible kingdom on earth shall be utterly overthrown. And therefore I would proceed directly to consider what the scripture reveals concerning the work of God itself, by which he will bring about this great event, as being the next thing to be accomplished that we are certain of from the prophecies of scripture.

I. I would observe some things *in general* concerning it.

1. We have all reason to conclude from the scriptures, that just before this work of God begins, it will be *a very dark time* with respect to the interests of religion in the world. It has been so before preceding glorious revivals of religion; when Christ came, it was an exceeding degenerate time among the Jews: and so it was a very dark time before the Reformation. And not only so, but it seems to be foretold in scripture, that it shall be a time of but little religion, when Christ shall come to set up his kingdom in the world. Thus when Christ spake of his coming, to encourage his elect, who cry to him day

and night, in Luke xviii. 8, he adds, " Nevertheless, when the Son of Man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth ?" Which seems to denote a great prevalency of infidelity just before Christ's coming to avenge his suffering church.—Though Christ's coming at the last judgment is not here to be excluded, yet there seems to be a special respect to his coming to deliver his church from their long-continued suffering, persecuted state, which is accomplished only at his coming at the destruction of Antichrist. Then will be accomplished the following passages, Rev. vi. 10. " How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth ?" and Rev. xviii. 20. " Rejoice over her, thou heaven, and ye holy apostles and prophets, for God hath avenged you on her."

It is *now* a very dark time with respect to the interests of religion, wherein there is but a little faith, and a great prevailing of infidelity on the earth. There is now a remarkable fulfilment of that in 2 Pet. iii. 3. " Knowing this, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts." And so Jude 17, 18. " But beloved, remember ye the words which were spoken before of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ; how that they told you there should be mockers in the last time, who should walk after their own ungodly lusts." Whether the times shall be any darker still, or how much darker, before the beginning of this glorious work of God, we cannot tell.

2. There is no reason from the Word of God to think any other, than that this great work of God, will be wrought, though very swiftly, yet *gradually*. As the children of Israel were *gradually* brought out of the Babylonish captivity, first one company, and then another, and *gradually* rebuilt their city and temple; and as the Heathen Roman empire was destroyed by a *gradual*, though a very swift prevalency of the gospel; so, though there are many things which seem to hold forth that the work of God would be exceeding swift,—and many great and wonderful events should very suddenly be brought to pass, and some great parts of Satan's visible kingdom should have a very sudden fall,—yet all will not be accomplished at once, as by some great miracle, like the resurrection of the dead. But this work will be accomplished by *means*, by the preaching of the gospel, and the use of the ordinary means of grace, and so shall be *gradually* brought to pass. Some shall be converted, and be the means of others conversion. God's spirit shall be poured out first to raise up instruments, and then those instruments shall be used with success. And doubtless one nation shall be enlightened and converted, and one false religion and false way of worship exploded, after another. By the representation in Dan. ii. 3, 4.

the stone cut out of the mountain without hands *gradually* grows. So Christ teaches us, that the kingdom of heaven is like a grain of mustard-seed, Matt. xiii. 31, 32, and like leaven hid in three measures of meal, ver. 33. The same representation we have in Mark iv. 26, 27, 28, and in the vision of the waters of the sanctuary, Ezek. xlvii.—The scriptures hold forth that there should be several successive great and glorious events by which this glorious work should be accomplished. The angel, speaking to the prophet Daniel of those glorious times, mentions two glorious periods, at the end of which glorious things shall be accomplished: Dan. xii. 11. "And from the time that the daily sacrifice shall be taken away, and the abomination that maketh desolate set up, there shall be a thousand two hundred and ninety days." But then he adds in the next verse, "Blessed is he that waiteth, and cometh to the thousand three hundred and five and thirty days;" intimating, that something very glorious should be accomplished at the end of the former period, but something much more glorious at the end of the latter.

II. I now proceed to show *how* this glorious work shall be accomplished.

1. The spirit of God shall be gloriously poured out for the wonderful *revival and propagation* of religion. This great work shall be accomplished, not by the authority of princes, nor by the wisdom of learned men, but by God's Holy Spirit: Zech. iv. 6, 7. "Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts. Who art thou, O great mountain? before Zerubbabel thou shalt become a plain, and he shall bring forth the head-stone thereof with shoutings, crying, Grace, grace unto it." So the prophet Ezekiel, speaking of this great work of God, says, chap. xxxix. 29, "Neither will I hide my face any more from them; for I have poured out my Spirit on the house of Israel, saith the Lord God." We know not where this pouring out of the Spirit shall begin, or whether in many places at once; or whether, what hath already taken place be not some forerunner and beginning of it.

This pouring out of the Spirit of God, when it is begun, shall soon bring great multitudes to forsake that vice and wickedness which now so generally prevails; and shall cause that vital religion, which is now so despised and laughed at in the world, to revive. The work of conversion shall break forth, and go on in such a manner as never has been hitherto; agreeable to Isa. xliv. 3, 4, 5.—God by pouring out his Holy Spirit, will furnish men to be glorious instruments of carrying on this work; will fill them with knowledge and wisdom, and fervent zeal for the promoting the kingdom of Christ, and the salvation of souls, and propagating the gospel in the world. The gospel shall begin to be preached with abundantly greater clearness

and power than had heretofore been. This great work of God shall be brought to pass by the preaching of the gospel, as is represented in Rev. xiv. 6, 7, 8; that before Babylon falls, the gospel shall be powerfully preached and propagated in the world.

This was typified of old by the sounding of the silver trumpets in Israel in the beginning of their Jubilee: Lev. xxv. 9. "Then shalt thou cause the trumpet of the jubilee to sound on the tenth day of the seventh month: on the day of atonement shall ye make the trumpet sound throughout all your land." The glorious times which are approaching, are the church's jubilee, which shall be introduced by the sounding of the silver trumpet of the gospel, as is foretold in Isa. xxvii. 13. "And it shall come to pass in that day, that the great trumpet shall be blown, and they shall come which were ready to perish in the land of Assyria, and the outcasts of the land of Egypt, and shall worship the Lord in the holy mount at Jerusalem." And there shall be a glorious pouring out of the Spirit with this clear and powerful preaching of the gospel, to make it successful for reviving those holy doctrines of religion which are now chiefly ridiculed in the world, and turning many from heresy, from Popery, and from other false religions; and also for turning many from their vice and profaneness, and for bringing vast multitudes savingly home to Christ.

The work of conversion shall go on in a wonderful manner, and spread more and more. Many shall flow together to the goodness of the Lord, one multitude after another continually, as in Isa. lx. 4, 5. "Lift up thine eyes round about, and see; all they gather themselves together, they come to thee; thy sons shall come from far, and thy daughters shall be nursed at thy side. Then thou shalt see, and flow together." And so ver. 8. "Who are these that fly as a cloud, and as the doves to their windows?" And as the gospel shall be preached to every tongue, and kindred, and nation, and people, before the fall of Antichrist; so we may suppose, that it will be gloriously successful to bring in multitudes from every nation; and shall spread more and more with wonderful swiftness, (see Isa. lxvi. 7.—9.)

2. This pouring out of the Spirit of God will not affect the overthrow of Satan's visible kingdom, till there has first been a violent and *mighty opposition* made. In this the scripture is plain, that when Christ is thus gloriously coming forth, when the destruction of Antichrist is ready at hand, and Satan's kingdom begins to totter, the powers of the kingdom of darkness will rise up, and mightily exert themselves. Thus, after the pouring out of the sixth vial, which was to dry up the river Euphrates, to prepare the way for the destruction of spiritual Babylon, (Rev. xvi.) the powers of hell will be

mightily alarmed, and will stir up themselves to oppose the kingdom of Christ, before the seventh vial shall be poured out, which shall give them a final and complete overthrow. The beloved disciple informs us, (ver. 13, 14,) that "three unclean spirits like frogs shall go forth unto the kings of the earth, to gather them together to the battle of the great day of God Almighty." This seems to be the last and greatest effort of Satan to save his kingdom from being overthrown; though, perhaps, he may make as great towards the end of the world to regain it.

When the Spirit begins to be so gloriously poured forth, when the devil sees such multitudes flocking to Christ in one nation and another, when the foundations and pillars of his kingdom are ready to come to swift and sudden destruction, all hell will be greatly alarmed. Satan has ever had a dread of having his kingdom overthrown, and has been doing great works to prevent it, especially since the day of Constantine the Great. To this end he set up those mighty kingdoms of Antichrist and Mahomet, and brought in all the heresies, superstitions, and corrupt opinions in the world. But when he sees all begin to fail, it will rouse him exceedingly. If Satan of old dreaded being cast out of the Roman empire, how much more does he dread being cast out of the whole world!

It seems, in this last great opposition, all the forces of Antichrist, and Mahometanism, and Heathenism, will be united; all the forces of Satan's visible kingdom through the whole world of mankind. And therefore it is said, that "spirits of devils shall go forth unto the kings of the earth, and of the whole world, to gather them together to the battle of the great day of God Almighty." And these spirits are said to come out of the mouth of the *dragon*, and out of the mouth of the *beast*, and out of the mouth of the *false prophet; i. e.* there shall be the spirit of Popery, the spirit of Mahometanism, and the spirit of Heathenism all united. By the beast is meant Antichrist; by the dragon, in this book, is commonly meant the devil, as he reigns over his Heathen kingdom; by the false prophet, is sometimes meant the Pope and his clergy; but here an eye seems to be had to Mahomet, whom his followers call the great prophet of God. This will be, as it were, the dying struggles of the old serpent; a battle wherein he will fight as one that is almost desperate.

We know not particularly in what manner this opposition shall be made. It is represented as a battle; it is called *the battle of the great day of God Almighty.* There will be some way or other a mighty struggle between Satan's kingdom and the church, and probably in all ways of opposition that can be; and doubtless great opposition by external force. The

princes of the world who are on the devil's side shall join hand in hand; for it is said, "The kings of the earth are gathered together to battle," Rev. xix. 19. And probably there will be great opposition by subtle disputers and carnal reasoning, persecution, virulent reproaches, craft, and subtilty. The devil now doubtless will ply his skill, as well as strength, to the utmost; and those who belong to his kingdom, will every where be stirred up, and engaged to make an united violent opposition against this holy religion, which they see prevailing so mightily in the world.——But,

3. Christ and his church shall in this battle obtain a complete and *entire victory* over their enemies. They shall be totally routed and overthrown in this their last effort. When the powers of hell and earth are thus gathered together against Christ, and his armies shall come forth against them by his word and Spirit, in how august and glorious a manner is this advance of Christ with his church described, Rev. xix. 11, &c. And to represent how great the victory they should obtain, and how mighty the overthrow of their enemies, it is said, (ver. 17, 18,) that "all the fowls of heaven are called together, to eat the great supper given them, of the flesh of kings, and captains, and mighty men," &c.; and then, in the following verses, we have a distinct account of the victory and overthrow.

In this victory the seventh vial shall be poured out. It is said, Rev. xvi. 16, of the great army that should be gathered together against Christ:—"And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue, *Armageddon*;" then it is said, "And the seventh angel poured out his vial into the air; and there came a great voice out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, It is done." Now the business is done for Satan and his adherents. When this victory is obtained, all is in effect done. Satan's last and greatest opposition is conquered; all his measures are defeated; the pillars of his kingdom broken asunder, and will fall of course. The devil is utterly baffled and confounded, and knows not what else to do. He now sees his Antichristian, Mahometan, and Heathenish kingdoms through the world, all tumbling down. He and his most powerful instruments are taken captive. Now that is in effect done, for which the church of God had been so long waiting and hoping, and so earnestly crying to God, saying, "How long, O Lord, holy and true," &c.

The angel who set his right foot on the sea, and his left foot on the earth, lift up his hand to heaven, and swore by *him that liveth for ever and ever*, &c. that when the seventh angel should come to sound, the time should be no longer.—And now the time is come; now the seventh trumpet sounds, and the seventh vial is poured out, both together: intimating,

that now all is finished as to the overthrow of Satan's visible kingdom on earth. This victory shall be by far the greatest that ever was obtained over Satan and his adherents. By this blow, with which the stone cut out of the mountain without hands shall strike the image of gold and silver, and brass, and iron, and clay, it shall all be broken to pieces. This will be a finishing blow to the image, so that it shall become as the chaff of the summer threshing-floor.

In this victory will be a most glorious display of divine power. Christ shall therein appear in the character of King of kings, and Lord of lords, as in Rev. xix. 16. Now Christ shall dash his enemies, even the strongest and proudest of them, in pieces; as a potter's vessel shall they be broken to shivers. —Then shall strength be shown out of weakness, and Christ shall cause his church to thresh the mountains, as in Isa. xli. 15. "Behold, I will make thee a new sharp threshing-instrument having teeth; thou shalt thresh the mountains, and beat them small, and shalt make the hills as chaff." And then shall be fulfilled Isa. xlii. 13—15.

III. Consequent on this victory, Satan's visible kingdom on earth shall be *destroyed*. When Satan is conquered in this last battle, the church of Christ will have easy work of it; as when Joshua and the children of Israel had obtained that great victory over the five kings of the Amorites. When God sent great hail-stones on their enemies, they had easy work of subduing the cities and country to which they belonged. So it was also after the other great battle that Joshua had with a great multitude at the waters of Merom. After this glorious victory of Christ and his church over their enemies, the chief powers of Satan's kingdom, they shall destroy that kingdom in all those cities and countries to which they belonged. After this the word of God shall have a speedy and swift progress through the earth; as it is said, that on the pouring out of the seventh vial, "the cities of the nations fell, and every island fled away, and the mountains were not found," Rev. xvi. 19, 20.— When once the stone cut out of the mountain without hands had broken the image in pieces, it was easy to abolish all the remains of it. The very wind will carry it away as the chaff of the summer threshing floor. Because Satan's visible kingdom on earth shall now be destroyed, therefore it is said, that the seventh vial by which this shall be done, shall be poured out into the air; which is represented in scripture as the special seat of his kingdom; for he is called "the prince of the power of the air," Eph. ii. 2. Now is come the time for punishing leviathan, that piercing serpent, of which we read in Isa. xxvii. 1. "In that day the Lord with his sore and great and strong sword, shall punish leviathan, the piercing serpent,

even leviathan, that crooked serpent, and he shall slay the dragon that is in the sea."

Concerning this overthrow of Satan's visible kingdom on earth, I would show wherein it will chiefly consist, with its extent and universality.

1. I would show wherein this overthrow of Satan's kingdom will chiefly consist. I shall mention the particular things in which it will consist, without pretending to determine in what order they shall come to pass, or which shall be accomplished first, or whether they shall be accomplished together.

(1.) *Heresies*, *infidelity*, and *superstition*, among those who have been brought up under the light of the gospel, will then be abolished; and particularly Deism, which is now so bold and *confident in infidelity*, shall be driven away, and vanish to nothing. All shall agree in the same great and important doctrines of the gospel; Zech. xiv. 9. "And the Lord shall be king over all the earth; in that day shall there be one Lord, and his name one." Then shall be abolished all superstitious modes of worship, and all shall cordially agree in worshipping God in his own way; Jer. xxxii. 39. "And I will give them one heart, and one way, that they may fear me for ever, for the good of them, and of their children after them."

(2.) The kingdom of *Antichrist* shall be utterly overthrown. His dominion has been much brought down already by the vial poured out on his throne in the Reformation; but then it shall be utterly destroyed. Then shall be proclaimed, "Babylon is fallen, is fallen." When the seventh angel sounds, "the time, times, and half a time, shall be out; and the time shall be no longer." Then shall be accomplished concerning Antichrist the things which are written (Rev. xviii.) of the spiritual Babylon, the idolatrous Roman government, that has for so many ages been the great enemy of the Christian church, first under Heathenism, then under Popery,—that proud city which lifted herself up to Heaven, in her pride and haughtiness; that cruel, bloody city, shall come down to the ground. Then shall that be fulfilled, Isa. xxvi. 5. "For he bringeth down them that dwell on high, the lofty city he layeth it low; he layeth it low, even to the ground, he bringeth it even to the dust." She shall be thrown down with violence, like a great mill-stone cast into the sea, and shall be found no more at all, and shall become an habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird. Now shall she be stripped of all her glory, and riches, and ornaments, and shall be cast out as an abominable branch, and shall be trodden down as the mire of the streets. All her policy and craft, in which she so abounded,

shall not save her. All the strength and wisdom of this great whore shall fail her, and there shall be none to help her. The kings of the earth, who before gave their power and strength to the beast, shall now hate the whore, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire, Rev. xvii. 16.

(3.) Satan's *Mahometan* kingdom shall be utterly overthrown. The locusts and horsemen in the 9th of Revelation, have their appointed and limited time set them there, and the false prophet shall be taken and destroyed. And then—though Mahometanism has been so vastly propagated in the world, and is upheld by such a great empire—this smoke, which has ascended out of the bottomless pit, shall be utterly scattered before the light of that glorious day, and the Mahometan empire shall fall at the sound of the great trumpet which shall then be blown.

(4.) *Jewish infidelity* shall then be overthrown. However obstinate they have been now for above seventeen hundred years in their rejection of Christ, and however rare have been the instances of individual conversions, ever since the destruction of Jerusalem—but they have, against the plain teachings of their own prophets, continued to approve of the cruelty of their forefathers in crucifying Christ—yet, when this day comes, the thick vail that blinds their eyes shall be removed, 2 Cor. iii. 16, and divine grace shall melt and renew their hard hearts, " and they shall look on him whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness as one that is in bitterness for his first-born," Zech. xii. 10, &c. And then shall the house of Israel be saved : the Jews in all their dispersions shall cast away their old infidelity, and shall have their hearts wonderfully changed, and abhor themselves for their past unbelief and obstinacy. They shall flow together to the blessed Jesus, penitently, humbly, and joyfully owning him as their glorious king and only Saviour, and shall with all their hearts, as with one heart and voice, declare his praises unto other nations.

Nothing is more certainly foretold than this national conversion of the Jews, in Rom. xi. There are also many passages of the Old Testament which cannot be interpreted in any other sense, which I cannot now stand to mention. Besides the prophecies of the calling of the Jews, we have a remarkable providential seal of the fulfilment of this great event, by a kind of continual miracle, *viz.* their being preserved a distinct nation in such a dispersed condition for above sixteen hundred years. The world affords nothing else like it. There is undoubtedly a remarkable hand of providence in it. When they shall be called, that ancient people, who alone

were God's people for so long a time, shall be his people again, never to be rejected more. They shall then be gathered into one fold together with the Gentiles; and so also shall the remains of the ten tribes, wherever they be, and though they have been rejected much longer than the Jews, be brought in with their brethren. The prophecies of Hosea especially seem to hold this forth, that in the future glorious times of the church, both Judah and Ephraim, or Judah and the ten tribes, shall be brought in together, and shall be united as one people, as they formerly were under David and Solomon; (Hos. i. 11, &c.)—Though we do not know the time in which this conversion of Israel will come to pass; yet thus much we may determine by scripture, that it will be before the glory of the Gentile part of the church shall be fully accomplished; because it is said, that their coming in shall be life from the dead to the Gentiles, (Rom. xi. 12—15.)

(5.) Then shall also Satan's *Heathenish* kingdom be overthrown. Gross Heathenism now possesses a great part of the earth, and there are supposed to be more Heathens now in the world, than of all other professions taken together. But then the Heathen nations shall be enlightened with the glorious gospel. There will be a wonderful spirit of pity towards them, and zeal for their instruction and conversion put into multitudes, and many shall go forth and carry the gospel unto them. Then shall the joyful sound be heard among them, and the Sun of righteousness shall arise with his glorious light shining on those vast regions of the earth that have been covered with Heathenish darkness for many thousand years. Many of them doubtless ever since the times of Moses and Abraham, have lain thus in a miserable condition, under the cruel tyranny of the devil, who has all this while blinded and befooled them, domineered over them, and made a prey of them. Now the glad tidings of the gospel shall sound there, and they shall be brought out of darkness into marvellous light.

It is promised, that Heathenism shall thus be destroyed in many places. God has said, That the gods that have not made these heavens and this earth, shall perish from the earth, and from under these heavens, Jer. x. 11, and that he will utterly abolish idols, Isa. ii. 18.——Then shall the many nations of Africa, who now seem to be in a state but little above the beasts, and in many respects much below them, be visited with glorious light, and delivered from all their darkness, and shall become a civil, Christian, understanding, and holy people. —Then shall the vast continent of America, which now in great part is covered with barbarous ignorance and cruelty, be every where covered with glorious gospel-light and Christian love: and instead of worshipping the devil as now they

do, they shall serve God, and praises shall be sung every where to the Lord Jesus Christ, the blessed Saviour of the world. So we may expect it will be in that great and populous part of the world, the East Indies, which are now mostly inhabited by the worshippers of the devil. Then the kingdom of Christ will be established in those continents which have been more lately discovered towards the north and south poles, where men differ very little from the wild beasts, except in impiety. The same will be the case with respect to those countries which have never yet been discovered. Thus will be gloriously fulfilled, Isa. xxxv. 1. "The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them: and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose." (See also verse 6, 7.)

2. Having thus shown wherein this overthrow of Satan's kingdom will consist, I come now to observe its *universal extent.* The visible kingdom of Satan shall be overthrown, and the kingdom of Christ set up on the ruins of it, every where throughout the whole habitable globe. Now shall the promise made to Abraham be fulfilled, That in him and in his seed "all the families of the earth shall be blessed;" and Christ now shall become "the desire of all nations," agreeable to Haggai ii. 7.—Now the kingdom of Christ shall in the most strict and literal sense be extended to all nations, and the whole earth. There are many passages of scripture that can be understood in no other sense. What can be more universal than Isa. xi. 9. "For the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea." As much as to say, As there is no part of the channel or cavity of the sea, but what is covered with water; so there shall be no part of the world of mankind but what shall be covered with the knowledge of God. So it is foretold in Isa. lxv. 22, that "all the ends of the earth" shall look to Christ and be saved. And to show that the words are to be understood in the most universal sense, it is said in the next verse, "I have sworn by myself, the word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, that unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear."—So the most universal expression is used, Dan. vii. 27. "And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High God."

When the devil was cast out of the Roman empire, because that was the highest and principal part of the world, and the other nations that were left were low and mean in comparison, it was represented as Satan's being cast out of heaven to the earth, Rev. xii. 9; but it is represented that he shall be cast out of the earth too, and shut up in hell, Rev. xx. 1, 2, 3.—This is the greatest revolution by far that ever came to pass: therefore it is said in Rev. xvi. 17, 18, That on the pouring

out of the seventh vial, there was "a great earthquake, such as was not since men were upon earth, so mighty an earthquake and so great." And this is the third great dispensation of providence, which is in scripture compared to Christ's coming to judgment, Rev. xvi. 15. There, after the sixth vial, and after the devil's armies were gathered together to their great battle, and just before Christ's glorious victory over them, it is said, "Behold, I come quickly; blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments." So it is called *Christ's coming*, 2 Thess. ii. 8. Speaking of Antichrist it is said, "And then shall that wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming." See also Dan. vii. 13, 14, where Christ's coming to set up his kingdom on earth, and to destroy Antichrist, is called *coming with clouds of heaven.* And this is more like Christ's last coming to judgment, than any of the preceding dispensations which are so called. The dispensation is so much greater and more universal, and so more like the day of judgment, which respects the whole world. The great spiritual resurrection of the church of God accompanying it, resembles the general resurrection at the end of the world more than any other. (See Rev. xx. 4.)

Terrible judgments and fearful destruction shall now be executed on God's enemies. There will doubtless at the introducing of this dispensation be a visible and awful hand of God against blasphemers, deists, obstinate heretics, and other enemies of Christ, terribly destroying them, with remarkable tokens of wrath and vengeance. More especially will this dispensation be attended with terrible judgments on Antichrist; the cruel persecutors who belong to the church of Rome, shall in a most awful manner be destroyed; which is compared to a casting of Antichrist into the burning flame, Dan. vii. 11, and to casting him alive into the lake that burns with fire and brimstone, Rev. xix. 20.

Then shall this cruel persecuting church suffer those judgments from God, which shall be far more dreadful than her persecutions of the saints, agreeable to Rev. xviii. 6, 7.——The judgments which God shall execute on the enemies of the church, are so great, that they are compared to God's sending great hail-stones from heaven upon them, every one of the weight of a talent, as it is said on the pouring out of the seventh vial. Rev. xvi. 21. "And there fell upon men a great hail out of heaven, every stone about the weight of a talent: and men blasphemed God, because of the plague of the hail; for the plague thereof was exceeding great." And now shall be that treading of the wine-press spoken of, Rev. xiv. 19, 20.

This shall put an end to the church's suffering state, and shall be attended with their glorious and joyful praises. The

church's afflicted state has been continued, excepting some short intermissions, from the resurrection of Christ to this time: but now shall a final end be put to her suffering state. Indeed after this, near the end of the world, the church shall be greatly threatened; but it is said, it shall be but for a *little season*, Rev. xx. 3: for as the times of the church's rest have been but short, before the long day of her afflictions are at an end; so whatever affliction she may suffer after this, will be very short. In every other respect, the day of the church's afflictions and persecution shall now come to a final end. The scriptures, in many places, speak of this time as the end of the suffering state of the church. So Isa. li. 22. "Behold, I have taken out of thine hand the cup of trembling, even the dregs of the cup of my fury, thou shalt no more drink it again. Then shall be proclaimed to the church, Isa. xl. 1, 2, "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins." Also Isa. liv. 8, 9, and lx. 20, belong to this time. "The Lord shall be thine everlasting light, and the days of thy mourning shall be ended." And so Zeph. iii. 15. "The Lord hath taken away thy judgments, he hath cast out thine enemy; the King of Israel, even the Lord, is in the midst of thee: thou shalt not see evil any more."

The time before this had been the church's sowing-time, wherein she sowed in tears and in blood; but now is her harvest, wherein she will come again rejoicing, bringing her sheaves with her. Now the time of travail of the woman clothed with the sun is at an end; now she hath brought forth her son: for this glorious setting up of the kingdom of Christ through the world, is what the church had been in travail for, with such terrible pangs, for so many ages: Isa. xxvi. 17.—"Like as a woman with child that draweth near the time of her delivery, is in pain, and crieth out in her pangs; so have we been in thy sight, O Lord." (See Isa. lx. 20, and lxi. 10, 11.) And now the church shall forget her sorrow, since a man-child is born into the world: now succeed her joyful praise and triumph. Her praises shall then go up to God from all parts of the earth, (as Isa. xlii. 10—12;) and praise shall not only fill the earth, but also heaven. The church on earth, and the church in heaven, shall both gloriously rejoice and praise God, as with one heart, on that occasion. Without doubt it will be a time of very distinguished joy and praise among the holy prophets and apostles, and the other saints in heaven: Rev. xviii. 20. "Rejoice over her, thou heaven, and ye holy apostles and prophets, for God hath avenged you on her." See how universal these praises will be in Isa. xliv. 23. "Sing,

O ye heavens, for the Lord hath done it: shout, ye lower parts of the earth: break forth into singing, ye mountains, O forest, and every tree therein: for the Lord hath redeemed Jacob, and glorified himself in Israel." See what joyful praises are sung to God on this occasion by the universal church in heaven and earth, in the beginning of the 19th chapter of Revelation.

This dispensation is above all preceding ones like Christ's coming to judgment, in that it so puts an end to the former state of the world, and introduces the everlasting kingdom of Christ. Now Satan's visible kingdom shall be overthrown, after it had stood ever since the building of Babel; the old heavens and the old earth shall in a greater measure pass away, and the new heavens and new earth be set up in a far more glorious manner, than ever before.——Thus I have shown how the success of Christ's purchase has been carried on through the times of the afflicted state of the Christian church, from Christ's resurrection, till Antichrist is fallen, and Satan's visible kingdom on earth is overthrown.

PART VIII.

The Success of Redemption through that space wherein the Christian church shall, for the most part, be in a state of Peace and Prosperity.

In order to describe this part, I would speak, *first*, of the prosperous state of the church through the greatest part of this period; and, *secondly*, of the great apostacy there shall be towards the close of it.

I. I would speak of the *prosperous state* of the church through the greater part of this period. And in the general, I would observe two things:

1. That this is most properly the time of the kingdom of *heaven upon earth.* Though the kingdom of heaven was in a degree set up soon after Christ's resurrection, and in a further degree in the time of Constantine; and though the Christian church in all ages of it is called *the kingdom of heaven;* yet this is the principal time of the kingdom of heaven upon earth, the time principally intended by the prophecies of Daniel, whence the Jews took the name of *the kingdom of heaven.*

2. Now is the principal fulfilment of all the prophecies of the Old Testament which speak of the glorious times of the

gospel in the latter days. Though there has been a glorious fulfilment of those prophecies already, in the times of the apostles, and of Constantine; yet the expressions are too high to suit any other time entirely, but that which is to succeed the fall of Antichrist. This is most properly the glorious day of the gospel. Other times are only forerunners and preparatory to this: those were the seed-time, but this is the harvest. But more particularly,

(1.) It will be a time of great light and *knowledge*. The present are days of darkness, in comparison of those days.—The light of that glorious time shall be so great, that it is represented as though there should then be no night, but only day; no evening nor darkness. So Zech. xiv. 6, 7. "And it shall come to pass in that day, that the light shall not be clear, nor dark. But it shall be one day, which shall be known to the Lord, not day, nor night: but it shall come to pass, that at evening-time it shall be light."——It is further represented, as though God would then give such light to his church, that it should so much exceed the glory of the light of the sun and moon, that they should be ashamed: Isa. xxiv. 23. "Then the moon shall be confounded, and the sun ashamed, when the Lord of hosts shall reign in Mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before his ancients gloriously."

There is a kind of vail now cast over the greater part of the world, which keeps them in darkness: but then this vail shall be destroyed: Isa. xxv. 7. "And he will destroy in this mountain the face of the covering cast over all people, and the vail that is spread over all nations." Then all countries and nations, even those which are now most ignorant, shall be full of light and knowledge. Great knowledge shall prevail every where. It may be hoped, that then many of the Negroes and Indians will be divines, and that excellent books will be published in Africa, in Ethiopia, in Tartary, and other now the most barbarous countries; and not only learned men, but others of more ordinary education, shall then be very knowing in religion: Isa. xxxii. 3, 4. "The eyes of them that see, shall not be dim; and the ears of them that hear, shall hearken. The heart also of the rash shall understand knowledge." Knowledge then shall be very universal among all sorts of persons; Jer. xxxi. 34. "And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord; for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them."

There shall then be a wonderful unravelling of the difficulties in the doctrines of religion, and clearing up of seeming inconsistencies: "So crooked things shall be made straight, and rough places shall be made plain, and darkness shall become light before God's people." Difficulties in scripture

shall then be cleared up, and wonderful things shall be discovered in the Word of God, which were never discovered before. The great discovery of those things in religion which had been before kept hid, seems to be compared to removing the vail, and discovering the ark of the testimony to the people, which before used to be kept in the secret part of the temple, and was never seen by them. Thus, at the sounding of the seventh angel, when it is proclaimed, "that the kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ;" it is added, that "the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in his temple the ark of his testament." So great shall be the increase of knowledge in this time, that heaven shall be as it were opened to the church of God on earth.

(2.) It shall be a time of great *holiness*. Now vital religion shall every where prevail and reign. Religion shall not be an empty profession, as it now mostly is, but holiness of heart and life shall abundantly prevail. Those times shall be an exception from what Christ says of the ordinary state of the church, *viz.* that there shall be *but few saved;* for now holiness shall become general: Isa. lx. 21. "Thy people also shall be all righteous." Not that there will be none remaining in a Christless condition; but that visible wickedness shall be suppressed every where, and true holiness shall become general, though not universal. It shall be a wonderful time, not only for the multitude of godly men, but for eminency of grace: Isa. lxv. 20. "There shall be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days; for the child shall die an hundred years old, but the sinner being an hundred years old, shall be accursed." Zech. xii 8. "He that is feeble among them at that day shall be as David; and the house of David shall be as God, as the angel of the Lord before them." And holiness shall then be as it were inscribed on every thing, on all men's common business and employments, and the common utensils of life: all shall be dedicated to God, and applied to holy purposes; every thing shall then be done to the glory of God: Isa. xxiii. 18. "And her merchandise and her hire shall be holiness to the Lord." (And so Zech. xiv. 20, 21.)——And as God's people then shall be eminent in holiness of heart, so they shall be also in holiness of life and practice.

(3.) It shall be a time wherein religion shall in every respect be *uppermost* in the world. It shall be had in great esteem and honour. The saints have hitherto for the most part been kept under, and wicked men have governed. But now they will be uppermost. The kingdom shall be given into the hands of the saints of the *Most High God*, Dan. vii. 27. And *they shall reign on earth*, Rev. v. 10. They shall

live and *reign with Christ a thousand years*, Rev. xx. 4. In that day, such persons as are eminent for true piety and religion, shall be chiefly promoted to places of trust and authority. Vital religion shall then take possession of kings' palaces and thrones; and those who are in highest advancement shall be holy men: Isa. xlix. 23. "And kings shall be thy nursing-fathers, and their queens thy nursing-mothers." Kings shall employ all their power, and glory, and riches, for the advancement of the honour and glory of Christ, and the good of his church: Isa. lx. 16. "Thou shalt also suck the milk of the Gentiles, and shalt suck the breasts of kings." And the great men of the world, and the rich merchants and others who have great wealth and influence, shall devote all to Christ and his church: Psalm xliv. 12. "The daughter of Tyre shall be there with a gift, even the rich among the people shall entreat thy favour."

(4.) Those will be times of *great peace and love*. There shall then be universal peace and a good understanding among the nations of the world, instead of confusion, wars, and bloodshed. Isa. ii. 4. "And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people; and they shall beat their swords into plough-shares, and their spears into pruning-hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more." It is represented as if all instruments of war, should be destroyed, having become useless; Psal. xlvi. 9. "He maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth: he breaketh the bow, and cutteth the spear in sunder; he burneth the chariot in the fire." (See also Zech. ix. 10.) Then shall all nations dwell quietly and safely, without fear of any enemy. Isa. xxxii. 18. "And my people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting places." (Also Zech. viii. 10, 11.)

Then shall malice, and envy, and wrath, and revenge be suppressed every where; and peace and love shall prevail between one man and another; which is most elegantly set forth in Isa. xi. 6—10. Then shall there be peace and love between rulers and ruled. Rulers shall love their people, and with all their might seek their best good; and the people shall love their rulers, shall joyfully submit to them, and give them that honour which is their due. So shall there be happy love between ministers and their people: Mal. iv. 6. "And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers." Then shall flourish in an eminent manner those Christian virtues of meekness, forgiveness, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, and brotherly kindness, those excellent fruits of the Spirit. Men, in their temper and disposition, shall then be like the lamb of God, the lovely Jesus. The body shall be conformed to the head.

Then shall all the world be united in one amiable society. All nations, in all parts of the world, on every side of the globe, shall then be knit together in sweet harmony. All parts of God's church shall assist and promote the spiritual good of one another. A communication shall then be upheld between all parts of the world to that end; and the art of navigation, which is now applied so much to favour men's covetousness and pride, and is used so much by wicked debauched men, shall then be consecrated to God, and applied to holy uses, (see Isa. lx. 5—9.) And then men will be abundant in expressing their love one to another, not only in words, but in deeds of charity, Isa. xxxii. 5. "The vile person shall be no more called liberal, nor the churl said to be bountiful;" but, (ver. 8.) "the liberal deviseth liberal things, and by liberal things shall he stand."

(5.) It will be a time of *excellent order* in the church of Christ. The true government and discipline of the church will then be settled and put into practice. All the world shall then be as one church, one orderly, regular, beautiful society. And as the body shall be one, so the members shall be in beautiful proportion to each other. Then shall that be verified in Psal. cxxii. 3. "Jerusalem is builded as a city, that is compact together."

(6.) The church of God shall then be *beautiful and glorious* on these accounts; yea, it will appear in the perfection of beauty: Isa. lx. 1. "Arise, shine, for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee." Isa. lxi. 10. "He hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels." On these accounts the church will then be the greatest image of heaven itself.

(7.) That will be a time of the greatest *temporal prosperity*. Such a spiritual state as we have just described, has a natural tendency to health and long life; and that this will actually be the case, is evident by Zech. viii. 4. "Thus saith the Lord of hosts, There shall yet old men and old women dwell in the streets of Jerusalem, and every man with his staff in his hand for very age." It has also a natural tendency to procure ease, quietness, pleasantness, and cheerfulness of mind, also wealth, and a great increase of children; as is intimated in Zech. viii. 5. "And the streets of the city shall be full of boys and girls playing in the streets thereof."——But further, the temporal prosperity of the people of God will also be promoted by a remarkable blessing from heaven: Isa. lxv. 21. "They shall build houses, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them." And in Mic. iv. 4. "But they shall sit every man under his vine, and under his fig-tree, and none shall make them afraid." Zech. vii. 12. "For the

seed shall be prosperous, the vine shall give her fruit, and the ground shall give her increase, and the heavens shall give their dew, and I will cause the remnant of this people to possess all these things." (See also Jer. xxxi. 12, 13, and Amos ix. 13.) Yea then they shall receive all manner of tokens of God's presence, acceptance, and favour: Jer. xxxiii. 9. "And it shall be to me a name of joy, a praise and an honour before all the nations of the earth, which shall hear all the good that I do unto them: and they shall fear and tremble for all the goodness and for all the prosperity that I procure unto it." Even the days of Solomon were but an image of those days, as to the temporal prosperity which shall be obtained in them.

(8.) It will also be a time of great rejoicing: Isa. xxxv. 10. "And the ransomed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion with songs, and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away." Chap. lv. 12. "For ye shall go out with joy, and be led forth with peace: the mountains and the hills shall break forth before you." Chap. lxvi. 11. "That ye may suck, and be satisfied with the breasts of her consolations: that ye may milk out, and be delighted with the abundance of her glory." Chap. xii. 3. "With joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation." That will be the church's glorious wedding-day with Christ upon earth: Rev. xix. 7. "Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him; for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready." Verse 9. "Blessed are they which are called to the marriage-supper of the Lamb."

The scriptures every where represent this prosperity to be of long continuance. The former intervals of rest and prosperity, as we before observed, are represented to be but short; but the representations of this state are quite different: Rev. xx. 4. "And I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus,—and they lived and reigned with Christ *a thousand years.*" Isa. lx. 15. "Whereas thou hast been forsaken and hated, so that no man went through thee, I will make thee an eternal excellency, a joy of *many generations.*"—This may suffice as to the prosperous state of the church through the greater part of the period from the destruction of Satan's visible kingdom in the world, to Christ's appearing in the clouds of heaven to judgment.

II. I now come to speak of the *great apostacy* there should be towards the close of this period, and how the church should, for a short time, be threatened by her enemies. And this I shall do under three particulars.

1. A little before the end of the world, *a great part of the world* shall fall away from Christ and his church. It is said, Rev. xx. 3, that Satan should be cast into the bottomless pit,

and shut up, and have a seal set upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more *till the thousand years should be fulfilled;* and that afterward he must be loosed out of his prison for a little season. Accordingly we are told, (ver. 7, 8,) that when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, and go forth to deceive the nations, which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog. This intimates, that the apostacy would be very general. The nations of the four quarters of the earth shall be deceived; and the number of those who shall now turn enemies to Christ shall be vastly great, as the army of Gog and Magog is represented in Ezek. It is said, (Rev. xx. 8,) that the number of them is as the sand of the sea, and that they went up on the breadth of the earth, as if they were an army large enough to reach from one side of the earth to the other.

Thus after a happy and glorious season, such a long day of light and holiness, of love and peace, and joy, it shall again be a dark time. Satan shall begin to set up his dominion again in the world; and this world shall again become a scene of darkness and wickedness. The bottomless pit shall be opened, and devils shall come up again out of it, and a dreadful smoke shall ascend to darken the world. And the church of Christ, instead of extending to the utmost bounds of the world, as it did before, shall be reduced to narrow limits. The world of mankind being continued so long in a state of great prosperity, shall now begin to abuse their prosperity, to serve their lust and corruption. This we learn from Luke xvii. 26, &c.

2. Those apostates shall make *great opposition* to the church of God. The church shall be threatened with a sudden and entire overthrow by them. It is said, Satan shall gather them together to battle, as the sand on the sea-shore: and they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city. So that this beloved city shall seem just ready to be swallowed up by them: for her enemies shall not only threaten her, but shall actually have gathered together against her; and not only so, but shall have besieged her, shall have compassed her about on every side.—However, there is nothing in the prophecy which seems to hold forth, that the church had actually fallen into their hands, as it had fallen into the hands of Antichrist, to whom it was given to make war with the saints, and to overcome them. God will never suffer this to take place after the fall of Antichrist; for then the day of her mourning shall be ended, alarmingly threatened with utter and sudden destruction.

3. Now the state of things will seem most remarkably to

call for Christ's immediate appearance to judgment. For then the world shall be filled with the most aggravated wickedness. For much the greater part of the world shall have become visibly wicked and open enemies to Christ, and their wickedness shall be dreadfully aggravated by their apostacy. Before the fall of Antichrist, most of the world was full of visibly wicked men. But the greater part of these are poor Heathens, who never enjoyed the light of the gospel; and others are those that have been bred up in the Mahometan or Popish darkness. but these have apostatized from the Christian church, the visible kingdom of Christ, in which they enjoyed the great light and privileges of glorious times, which shall be incomparably greater than the light and privileges which the church of God enjoys now. This apostacy will be most like the apostacy of the devils of any that ever had before been: for the devils apostatized and turned enemies to Christ, though they enjoyed the light of heaven; and these will apostatize, and turn enemies to him, though they have enjoyed the light and privileges of the glorious times of the church. That such should turn open and avowed enemies to Christ, and should seek the ruin of his church, will cry aloud for such immediate vengeance as was executed on the devils when they fell.

The wickedness of the world will remarkably call for Christ's immediate appearing in flaming fire to take vengeance on them, because of the way in which they shall manifest their wickedness. This will be by scoffing and blaspheming Christ and his holy religion; and particularly, they will scoff at the notion of Christ's coming to judgment, of which the church shall be in expectation. For now doubtless will be the greatest fulfilment of 2 Pet. iii. 3, 4. "Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and saying, where is the promise of his coming? For since the fathers fell asleep all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation." They shall be in no expectation of the coming of Christ to judgment, and shall laugh at the notion. They shall trample all such things under foot, and shall give up themselves to their lusts, or to eat and drink, and wallow in sensual delights, as though they were to be here for ever. They shall despise the warnings the church shall give them of the coming of Christ to judgment, as the people of the old world despised what Noah told them of the approaching flood, and as the people of Sodom did when Lot said to them, "The Lord will destroy this city." Their wickedness on this account will cry aloud to heaven for Christ's appearing in flaming fire to take vengeance of his enemies; and because they shall exercise their wickedness in a wicked design and violent attempt against the holy city of God, where-

in for so long a time, so much of the religion of Christ had been seen.

And the great number of the wicked is another thing which shall especially call for Christ's coming; for the world then will doubtless be exceeding full of people, having continued so long in so great a state of prosperity, without such terrible desolating extremities, as wars, pestilences, and the like, to diminish them. And the major part of this world, which shall be so populous, will be wicked contemptuous apostates from God. Undoubtedly the world then will be by far fuller of wickedness than ever it was before, from its foundation. And if the wickedness of the old world, when men began to multiply on the earth, called for the destruction of the world by a deluge of *water*, this wickedness will as much call for its destruction by a deluge of *fire*.

Again, the circumstances of the church at that day will also eminently call for the immediate appearing of Christ, as they will be compassed about by their blasphemous murderous enemies, just ready to be swallowed up by them. And it will be a most distressing time with the church, excepting the comfort they will have in the hope of deliverance from God: for all other help will seem to fail. The case will be come to the last extremity, and there will be an immediate need that Christ should come to their deliverance. And though the church shall be so eminently threatened, yet so will Providence order it, that it shall be preserved till Christ shall appear in his immediate presence, coming in the glory of his Father, with all his holy angels. And then will come the time when all the elect shall be gathered in. That work of conversion which has been carried on from the beginning of the church after the fall through all those ages, shall be carried on no more. There never shall another soul be converted. Every one of those many millions, whose names are written in the book of life before the foundation of the world, shall be brought in; not one soul shall be lost. And the mystical body of Christ, which has been growing since it first began in the days of Adam, will be complete as to the number of parts, having every one of its members. In this respect, the work of redemption will now be finished. And now the end for which the means of grace have been instituted shall be obtained—All that effect which was intended, shall now be accomplished.

PART IX.

The General Judgment.

THUS I have shown how the success of Christ's redemption has been accomplished during the continuance of the Christian church under the means of grace. We have seen what great revolutions there have been, and are to be, during this space of time; how the great wheels of providence have gone round for the accomplishment of that kind of success of Christ's purchase, which consists in the bestowment of grace on the elect. In the prosecution of the subject, we are come to the time when all the wheels have gone round; the course of things in this state of it is finished, and all things are ripe for Christ's coming to judgment.

The success of Christ's purchase is of two kinds, consisting either in grace or glory. The success consisting in the former of these, is to be seen in those works of God which are wrought during those ages that the church is continued under the means of grace; and the success consisting in the latter, will chiefly be accomplished at the day of judgment.—Having already shown how the *former* kind of success has been accomplished, I come now to the *latter*, viz. that kind of success which is accomplished in the bestowment of *glory* on the church at the day of judgment.—And here I would mention two or three things in *general*, concerning this kind of success of Christ's purchase.

1. How *great* the success of Christ's purchase is, appears chiefly in this very thing. The success of Christ's purchase summarily consists in the *salvation* of the elect. But this bestowment of *glory* is eminently called *their salvation:* Heb. ix. 28. "To them that look for him, shall he appear the second time, without sin unto salvation."—So it is called *redemption*, being eminently that wherein the redemption of the church consists. So in Eph. iv. 30. "Sealed unto the day of redemption;" and Luke xxi. 28, and Eph. i. 14. "Redemption of the purchased possession."

2. All that precedes this, while the church is under the means of grace, is only to make way for the success which is to be accomplished in the bestowment of glory. The *means* of grace, and God's *grace*, itself, is bestowed on the elect to make them meet for glory.

3. All those glorious things which were brought to pass for the church while under the means of grace, are but images and shadows of this. So were those glorious things which were accomplished for the church in the days of Constantine

the Great; and so is all that glory which is to succeed the fall of Antichrist. However great, it is all but a shadow of what will be bestowed at the day of judgment. But I hasten more particularly to show how this kind of success will be accomplished.

1. Christ will appear in the glory of his Father, with all his holy angels, coming in the clouds of heaven. When the world is thus revelling in their wickedness, and compassing the holy city, just ready to destroy it, then shall the glorious Redeemer make his appearance. He through whom this redemption has all along been carried on, shall appear in the sight of the world; the light of his glory shall break forth; the whole world shall immediately have notice of it, and they shall lift up their eyes and behold this wonderful sight. *Every eye shall see him*, (Rev. i. 7.) Christ shall appear coming in his human nature, in that same body (now glorified) which was brought forth in a stable, and laid in a manger, which afterwards was so cruelly used, and nailed to the cross.

Men shall now lift up their eyes, and see him coming in such majesty and glory as now is to us utterly inconceivable. The glory of the sun in a clear firmament, will be but darkness in comparison of it; and all the glorious angels and archangels shall attend him; thousand thousands ministering to him, and ten thousand times ten thousand round about him.—How different a person will he then appear from what he did at his first coming, when he was as a root out of a dry ground, a poor, despised, afflicted man! How different now is his appearance, in the midst of those glorious angels, principalities, and powers, in heavenly places, attending him as his ordinary servants, from what it was when in the midst of a ring of soldiers, with his mock robe and his crown of thorns, buffeted and spit upon, or hanging on the cross between two thieves, with a multitude of his enemies triumphing over him!

This will be a most unexpected sight to the wicked world: it will come as a cry at midnight: they shall be taken in the midst of their wickedness, and it will give them a dreadful alarm. It will at once break up their revels, their eating and drinking, and carousing. It will put a quick end to the design of the great army that will then be compassing the camp of the saints: it will make them let drop their weapons out of their hands. The world which will then be very full of people, most of whom will be wicked men, will then be filled with dolorous shrieking and crying; for all the kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him, (Rev. i. 7.) and where shall they hide themselves? How will the sight of that awful majesty terrify them when taken in the midst of their wickedness! Then they shall see who he is, what kind of a person he is, whom they have mocked and scoffed at, and whose church they

have been endeavouring to overthrow. This sight will change their voice. The voice of their laughter and singing, while they are marrying and giving in marriage, and the voice of their scoffing, shall be changed into hideous, hellish yelling. Their countenances shall be changed from a show of carnal mirth, haughty pride, and contempt of God's people; they shall put on ghastly terror and amazement; and trembling and chattering of teeth shall seize upon them.

But with respect to the saints, it shall be a joyful and most glorious sight to them; for this sight will at once deliver them from all fear of their enemies, who were before compassing them about, just ready to swallow them up. Deliverance shall come in their extremity; the glorious Captain of their salvation shall appear for them, at a time when no other help appeared. Then shall they lift up their heads, and their redemption shall be drawing nigh, (Luke xxi. 28.) Christ will appear with infinite majesty, yet at the same time they shall see infinite love in his countenance. And thus to see their Redeemer coming in the clouds of heaven, will fill their hearts full of gladness. Their countenances also shall be changed, not as the countenances of the wicked, but from being sorrowful, to be exceedingly joyful and triumphant. And now the work of redemption will be finished in another sense, *viz.* that the whole church shall be completely and eternally freed from all persecution and molestation from wicked men and devils.

II. The last trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised, and the living changed. God sent forth his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, to gather together his elect from the four corners of the earth in a mystical sense, before the destruction of Jerusalem; *i. e.* he sent forth the apostles, and others, to preach the gospel all over the world. And so in a mystical sense the great trumpet was blown at the beginning of the glorious times of the church. But now the great trumpet is blown in a more literal sense, with a mighty sound which shakes the earth. There will be a great signal given by a mighty sound made, which is called *the voice of the archangel*, as being the angel of greatest strength; 1 Thess. iv. 16. "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God." On the sound of the great trumpet, the dead shall be raised every where. Now the number of the dead is very great. How many has death cut down since the world has stood. But then the number will be much greater, the world shall have stood longer, and through most of the remaining time it will doubtless be much fuller of inhabitants than ever it has been. All these shall now rise from the dead. The graves shall be opened in all parts of the world, and the sea shall give up the innumerable dead that are in it, (Rev. xx. 13.)

And now all the inhabitants that ever shall have been upon the face of the earth, shall all appear upon earth at once. Among these will be Adam and Eve, the first parents of mankind, Abel, and Seth, and Methuselah, and all the saints who were their cotemporaries; Noah and Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the prophets of Israel and holy confessors. Among them will appear all the holy apostles of Jesus Christ, and all the saints of their times; all the holy martyrs who fell under furious persecutions. There will be found all who belonged to the church in its wilderness-state, during the dark times of Antichrist, and all who have suffered under his persecuting cruelty, with all the saints of past and the present time, and that shall be to the end of the world.—Now also all the enemies of the church in all the ages shall appear again; all the wicked Heathens, and Jews, and Mahometans, and Papists. Sinners of all sorts; demure hypocrites, prophane sensualists, heretics, deists, and all cruel persecutors, and all who shall have died in sin, shall come together.

And at the same time that the dead are raised, the living shall be changed. The bodies of the wicked who shall then be living, shall be so changed as to fit them for eternal torment; and the bodies of all the living saints shall be changed to be like unto Christ's glorious body, 1 Cor. xv. 51, 52, 53.——The bodies of the saints shall be so changed as to render them for ever incapable of pain or affliction, or uneasiness; and all that dulness and heaviness, and all that deformity, which their bodies had before, shall be put off; and they shall put on strength and beauty, activity and incorruptible unfading glory. And in such glory shall the bodies of all the risen saints appear.

And now the work of redemption shall be finished in another respect, *viz.* that all the elect shall now be actually redeemed both in soul and body. Before this, the work of redemption, as to its actual success, was but incomplete; for only the *souls* of the redeemed were actually saved and glorified, excepting in some few instances: but now all the *bodies* of the saints shall be saved and glorified together; all the elect shall be glorified in the whole man, the soul and body in union.

III. Now shall the saints be caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and all wicked men and devils shall be arraigned before the judgment-seat. When the dead saints are raised, then the whole church, consisting of all the elect through all ages, will stand together on the earth, at least all excepting those few whose bodies were glorified before; and then they shall all mount up as with wings to meet Christ. It seems that Christ, when he comes to judgment, will not come quite to the ground, but his throne will be fixed in the airy

region, whence he may be seen by all that vast multitude that shall be gathered before him. The saints therefore shall ascend up to their Saviour. Thus the apostle tells us, that when the dead in Christ are raised, and the living changed, then those who are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them, to meet the Lord in the air, and so shall we be ever with the Lord, 1 Thess. iv. 16, 17. What a wonderful sight will that be, when all the many millions of saints are thus mounting up.

Then shall the work of redemption be finished in another respect: then shall the whole church be perfectly and for ever delivered from this present evil world; shall take their everlasting leave of this earth, where they have been strangers, and which has been for the most part a scene of trouble and sorrow: where the devil has reigned as God, and has greatly molested them, and which has been such a scene of wickedness and abomination; where Christ their Lord has been cruelly used; and where they have been so hated, reproached, and persecuted. They shall leave it, and shall never set foot on it again. And there shall be an everlasting separation made between them and wicked men. Before, they were mixed together, and it was impossible in many instances to determine their characters; but now all shall become visible; both saints and sinners shall appear in their true characters and forms.—Then shall all the church be seen ascending to the right hand of Christ. What a mighty cloud of them will there be!

And then also the work of redemption will be finished in another respect, *viz.* that then the church shall all be gathered together. They all belonged to one society before, but yet were greatly separated with respect to the place of their habitation. Some were in heaven, and some on earth; and those who were on earth were separated, many of them by wide oceans, and vast continents. But now they shall all be gathered together, never to be separated any more. And not only shall all the members of the church now be gathered together, but all shall be gathered unto their Head, into his immediate glorious presence, never to be separated from him any more.

At the same time, all wicked men and devils shall be brought before the judgment-seat of Christ. These shall be gathered to the left hand of Christ, and, as it seems, will still remain upon the earth, and shall not be caught up into the air, as the saints shall be. The devil, that old serpent, shall now be dragged up out of hell. He, that first procured the fall and misery of mankind, and has so set himself against their redemption—and has all along shown himself such an inveterate enemy to the Redeemer—shall never more have any thing to do with the church of God, nor be suffered in the least to afflict or molest any member of it for ever. Instead of that,

now he must be judged, and receive the due reward of his deeds. Now is come the time which he has always dreaded; the time wherein he must be judged, and receive his full punishment. He who by his temptation maliciously procured Christ's crucifixion, and triumphed as though he had obtained the victory, even *he* shall see the consequences of that death which he procured. Now he must stand before that same Jesus, to be judged, condemned, and eternally destroyed by him. If Satan, the prince of hell, trembles at the thought of it thousands of years beforehand, how much more will he tremble, proud and stubborn as he is, when he comes to stand at Christ's bar!

Then shall he also stand at the bar of the saints, whom he has so hated, afflicted, and molested: for the saints shall judge him with Christ: 1 Cor. vi. 3. "Know ye not that we shall judge angels?" Now shall he be as it were subdued under the church's feet, agreeable to Rom. xvi. 20.——Satan, when he first tempted our first parents to sin, deceitfully and lyingly told them, that they should be as gods; but little did he think that they should indeed be so far *as gods*, as to be assessors with God to judge him. Much less did he think, that one of that *nature* which he then tempted, one of the posterity of those very *persons* whom he tempted, should actually be united to God; that as God he should judge the world, and that he himself must stand trembling and astonished before his judgment-seat. But thus all the devils in hell, who have so opposed Christ and his kingdom, shall now at last stand in utmost amazement and horror before Christ and his church, who shall appear to condemn them.

Now also shall all Christ's other enemies be brought to appear before him. Now shall proud scribes and Pharisees, who had such a malignant hatred of Christ while in his state of humiliation, and who persecuted him to death, be made to come. Now those before whose judgment-seat Christ once stood, as a malefactor at their bar—and those who mocked him, buffeted him, and spit in his face—shall see Christ in his awful glory, as forewarned, Matt. xxvi. 64, 65. Then *Christ* was before *their* judgment-seat; but now it is *their* turn to stand before *his* judgment-seat with inconceivable horror and amazement, with ghastly countenances, quaking limbs, chattering teeth, and knees smiting one against another.

Now also all the cruel enemies and persecutors of the church that have been in all ages, shall come in sight together. Pharaoh and the Egyptians, Antiochus Epiphanes, the malignant scribes and Pharisees, the persecuting heathen emperors, Julian the apostate, the cruel persecuting Popes and Papists, Gog and Magog, shall all appear at once before the judgment-seat of Christ. They and the saints who have in every age

been persecuted by them, shall come in sight, and must now confront one another before the great Judge. And now shall the saints on their glorious thrones be made the judges of those unjust kings and rulers who before judged and condemned them, and put them to cruel death. Now shall those persecutors behold the glory to which they are arrived, whom they before so cruelly despised, and so cruelly treated. Thus wonderfully will the face of things be altered; now will all things be coming to rights.

IV. The righteousness of the church shall be manifested, and all the wickedness of their enemies shall be brought to light. Those saints who had been the objects of hatred, reproach and contempt in the world; reviled and condemned by their persecutors without a cause, shall now be fully vindicated. They shall now appear clothed with the glorious robe of Christ's righteousness. It shall be most manifest before the world, that Christ's righteousness is theirs, and they shall gloriously shine forth in it. Then shall their inherent holiness be made manifest, and all their good works be brought to light. The good things which they did in secret shall now be manifested openly. Those holy ones of God, who had been treated as the filth and offscouring of the earth, as if not fit to live, as worse than beasts or devils, shall now appear to have been the excellent of the earth. Now God will bring forth their righteousness as the light, and their judgment as the noon-day. And now it shall appear who *indeed* were those wicked persons that were not fit to live; when all the wickedness of the enemies of Christ and his church, their pride, their malice, their cruelty, their hatred of true religion, shall be set forth in all its horrid acts, in its proper colours.

And now the righteous may be heard before this great Judge, who could not be heard before those unjust judges. Now they shall declare their cause, and rise up in judgment against their persecutors, and shall declare how they had been treated by them. And now all the wickedness of the wicked shall be brought to light; even all their *secret* wickedness, and their very hearts shall be opened to view, and as it were turned inside out, before the bright light of that great day. Things which have been spoken in the ear, in the closet, and done in the dark, shall be manifested in the light, and proclaimed before angels and men.

V. The sentence shall be pronounced on the righteous and the wicked. Christ, the glorious judge, shall pass that blessed sentence on the church at his right hand, *Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.* This sentence shall be pronounced with infinite love, and the voice will cause every heart to flow with joy. Thus Christ shall pronounce a sentence of justification

on millions, who before had a sentence of condemnation passed upon them by their persecuting rulers. He will thus put honour upon those who have been before despised; he will own them for his, and will put a crown of glory upon their heads before the world; and then shall they shine forth as the sun with Jesus Christ in glory and joy, in the sight of all their enemies.

And then shall the sentence of condemnation be passed on the wicked, *Depart, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.* Thus shall the church's enemies be condemned; in which sentence of condemnation, the holy martyrs, who have suffered from them, shall concur. When the words of this sentence are pronounced, they will strike every heart of those at the left hand with inconceivable horror and amazement. Every syllable of it will be more terrible than a stream of lightning through their hearts. What horrible shrieking, quaking, gnashing of teeth, distortions of countenance, hideous looks, hideous actions, and hideous voices, will be seen through all that vast throng!

VI. Upon this, Christ and all his saints, and all the holy angels ministering to them, shall leave this lower world, and ascend towards the highest heavens. Christ shall ascend in as great glory as he descended, and in some respects greater: for now he shall ascend with his elect church with him, glorified in body and soul. Christ's first ascension to heaven soon after his own resurrection was very glorious. But this his second ascension, with his mystical body, his whole church, shall be far more glorious. The redeemed church shall all ascend with him in a most joyful and triumphant manner: and all their enemies and persecutors, who shall be left behind to be consumed, shall see the sight, and hear their songs.—And thus Christ's church shall for ever leave this accursed world, to go into the highest heavens, the paradise of God, the kingdom prepared for them from the foundation of the world.

VII. When they are gone, this world shall be set on fire, and be turned into a great furnace, wherein all the enemies of Christ and his church shall be tormented for ever and ever. This is manifest by 2 Pet. iii. 7. "But the heavens and the earth which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment, and perdition of ungodly men." When Christ and his church are ascended to a distance from this world—that miserable company of the wicked being left behind, to have their sentence executed upon them here—then, this whole lower world shall be set on fire, either from heaven, or by fire breaking out of the bowels of the earth, or both, as it was with the water in the time of the deluge. However, this lower world shall be set all on fire.—— How will it strike the wicked with horror, when the fire begins

to lay hold upon them, and they find no way to escape from it! What shrieking and crying will there be among those many millions, when they begin to enter into this great furnace, when the whole world shall be a furnace of the fiercest and most raging heat! insomuch that the apostle Peter says, (2 Pet. iii. 10, 12,) "that the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein, shall be burnt up; and the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat." And so fierce shall be its heat, that it shall burn the earth into its very centre: which seems to be what is meant, Deut. xxxii. 22. "For a fire is kindled in my anger, and shall burn unto the lowest hell, and shall consume the earth with her increase, and set on fire the foundations of the mountains."

And here shall all the persecutors of the church of God burn in everlasting fire, who had before burnt the saints at the stake; and shall suffer torments far beyond all that their utmost wit and malice could inflict on the saints. And here the bodies of all the wicked shall burn, and be tormented to all eternity and never be consumed; and the wrath of God shall be poured out on their souls. Though the souls of the wicked in hell do now suffer dreadful punishment, yet their punishment will be so increased at the day of judgment, that what they suffered before is, in comparison of it, as an imprisonment to the execution which follows it. And now the devil, that old serpent, shall receive his full punishment; now that for fear of which he before trembled, shall fully come upon him. This world, which formerly used to be the place of his kingdom, where he set up himself as God, shall now be the place of his complete punishment, of full and everlasting torment. And in this, one design of the work of redemption, *viz.* putting Christ's enemies under his feet, shall be perfectly accomplished. His enemies shall now be made his footstool, in the fullest degree. Now shall be the most perfect fulfilment of Gen. iii. 15, "It shall bruise thy head."

VIII. At the same time, all the church shall enter with Christ, their glorious Lord, into the highest heavens, and there shall enter on the state of their highest and eternal blessedness and glory. While the lower world, which they have left under their feet, is seized with the fire of God's vengeance, and flames are kindling upon it, and the wicked are entering into everlasting fire, the whole church shall enter, with their glorious head, and all the holy angels attending, in a joyful manner, into the eternal paradise of God, the palace of the great Jehovah, their heavenly Father. The gates shall open wide for them to enter, and there Christ will bring them into his chambers in the highest sense. Here Christ will bring them and

present them in glory to his Father, saying, *Here am I, and the children which thou hast given me;* as much as to say, Here am I, with every one of those whom thou gavest me from eternity to take the care of, that they might be redeemed and glorified, and to redeem whom I have done and suffered so much, and to make way for whose redemption I have for so many ages been accomplishing such great changes. Here they are now perfectly redeemed in body and soul; I have delivered them from all the ill fruits of the fall, and freed them from all their enemies: I have brought them altogether into one glorious society, and united them all in myself: I have openly justified them before all angels and men, and here I have brought them all away from that accursed world where they have suffered so much, and have brought them before thy throne: I have done all that for them which thou hast appointed me: I have perfectly cleansed them in my blood, and here they are in perfect holiness, shining with thy perfect image. And then the Father will accept of them, own them all for his children, and welcome them to the eternal and perfect inheritance and glory of his house, and will on this occasion give more glorious manifestations of his love than ever before, and will admit them to a more full and perfect enjoyment of himself.

Now shall be the marriage of the Lamb in the most perfect sense. The commencement of the glorious times of the church on earth, after the fall of Antichrist, is represented as the marriage of the Lamb; but after this we read of another marriage of the Lamb, at the close of the day of judgment.—After the beloved disciple had given an account of the day of judgment, (Rev. xx. xxi.) he gives an account, that he saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. Christ shall bring his church into his Father's house in heaven, as his bride, without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing.

The bridegroom and the bride shall then enter into heaven, both having on their wedding-robes, attended with all the glorious angels. And there they enter on the feast and joys of their marriage before the Father; they shall then begin an everlasting wedding-day. This shall be the day of the gladness of Christ's heart, wherein he will greatly rejoice, and all the saints shall rejoice with them. Christ shall rejoice over his bride, and the bride shall rejoice in her husband, in the state of her consummate and everlasting blessedness, of which we have a particular description in the 21st and 22d chapters of Revelation.

And now the whole work of redemption is finished. Now the top-stone of the building is laid. In the progress of our discourse, we have followed the church of God in all her

great changes, all her tossings to and fro, all her storms and tempests through the many ages of the world. We have seen her enter the harbour, and landed in the highest heavens, in complete and eternal glory. We have gone through the several ages of time, as the providence and word of God have led us. We have seen all the church's enemies fixed in endless misery, and have seen the church presented in her perfect redemption before her Father in heaven, there to enjoy this most unspeakable and inconceivable glory and blessedness; and there we leave her to enjoy this glory throughout the never-ending ages of eternity.

Now all Christ's enemies will be perfectly put under his feet, and he shall have his most perfect triumph over sin and Satan, and all his instruments, and death, and hell. Now shall all the promises made to Christ by God the Father before the foundation of the world, the promises of the covenant of redemption, be fully accomplished. Christ shall now perfectly have obtained the joy set before him, for which he undertook those great sufferings in his state of humiliation. Now shall all the hopes and expectations of the saints be fulfilled. The state of the church before, was progressive and preparatory: but now she is arrived to her most perfect state of glory. All the glory of the church on earth is but a faint shadow of this her consummate glory in heaven.

Now Christ the great Redeemer shall be most perfectly glorified. God the Father shall be glorified in him, and the Holy Ghost shall be most fully glorified in the perfection of his work on the hearts of all the church.——And now shall that new heaven and new earth, or the renewed state of things, be completely finished, after the material frame of the old heavens and old earth is destroyed: Rev. xxi. I. "And I saw a new heaven, and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away."—And now will the great Redeemer have perfected every thing that appertains to the work of redemption, which he began so soon after the fall of man. And who can conceive of the triumph of those praises which shall be sung in heaven on this great occasion, so much greater than that on the fall of Antichrist! The beloved disciple John (Rev. xix.) seems to want expressions to describe those praises, and says, "It was as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia; for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth." But much more inexpressible will those praises be, which will be sung in heaven after the final consummation of all things. How shall the praises of that vast and glorious multitude be as mighty thunderings indeed!

How are all the former things passed away, and what a glorious state are things fixed in to remain to all eternity!—— And as Christ, when he first entered upon the work of redemp-

tion, had the kingdom committed to him of the Father, and as he took on himself the administration of the affairs of the universe, to manage all so as to subserve the purposes of this affair; so now, the work being finished, he will deliver up the kingdom to God, even the Father. 1 Cor. xv. 24. "Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule, and all authority and power." Not that Christ shall cease to reign after this; for it is said, Luke i. 33, "He shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever, and of his kingdom there shall be no end;" and Dan. vii. 14, "His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed." But the meaning is, that Christ shall deliver up that kingdom or dominion which he has over the world, as the Father's delegate or vicegerent, which the Father committed to him, to be managed in subserviency to this great design of redemption. The end of this commission, or delegation, which he had from the Father, seems to be to subserve this particular design of redemption; and therefore, when that design is fully accomplished, the commission will cease, and Christ will deliver it up to the Father, from whom he received it.

PART X.

Improvement of the Whole.

I PROCEED now to enter upon some improvement of the whole that has been said from this doctrine.

I. Hence we may learn how great a work is this of redemption. We have now had it, though in a very imperfect manner, set forth, in its whole progress, from its first beginning after the fall to its consummation. We have seen how God has carried on this building, by a long succession of wonderful works, advancing it higher and higher from one age to another, till the top-stone is laid. And now let us consider how great a work this is. Do men, when they behold some great edifices, admire their magnificence; how well may we admire the greatness of this building of God, which he builds up age after age? There are three things exhibited to us in what has been said, which especially show the *greatness* of the work of redemption.

1. The greatness of those *particular events*, and dispensations of providence, by which it is accomplished. How great are those things which God has done, which are but so many parts of this great work! What great things were done in the world to *prepare the way* for Christ's coming to purchase, and what great things were done in the actual purchase of redemption! What a wonderful thing was accomplished to put Christ in an immediate capacity for this purchase, *viz.* his *incarnation*, that God should become man! And what great things were done in that purchase, that a person, who is the eternal Jehovah, should live upon earth for four or five and thirty years together, in a mean, despised condition, that he should spend his life in such labours and sufferings, and that at last he should die upon the cross! And what great things have been done to accomplish the *success* of Christ's redemption! what great things to put him into a capacity to accomplish this success! For this purpose he rose from the dead, and ascended into heaven, and all things were made subject to him. How many miracles have been wrought, what mighty revolutions have been brought to pass in the world already, and how much greater shall be brought to pass, in order to it!

2. The *number* of those great events by which God carries on this work, shows the greatness of the work. Those mighty revolutions are so many as to fill up many ages. The particular wonderful events by which the work of creation was carried on filled up six days; but the great dispensations by which the work of redemption is carried on, are so many, that they fill up six or seven thousand years at least, as we have reason to conclude from the word of God.——There were great things wrought in this affair before the flood, and in the flood the world was once destroyed by water, and God's church was so wonderfully preserved from it in order to carry on this work. And after the flood, what great things did God work relating to the resettling of the world, to the building of Babel, the dispersing of the nations, the shortening of the days of man's life, the calling of Abraham, the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, and that long series of wonderful providences relating to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph; and those wonders in Egypt, and at the Red Sea, in the wilderness, and in Canaan, in Joshua's time, and by a long succession of wonderful providences from age to age towards the nation of the Jews.

What great things were wrought by God, in so often overturning the world before Christ came, to make way for his coming! What great things were done also in Christ's time, and after that in overturning Satan's kingdom in the Heathen empire, and in so preserving his church in the dark times of Popery, and in bringing about the Reformation!—

How many great and wonderful things will be effected in accomplishing the glorious times of the church, and at Christ's last coming on the day of judgment, in the destruction of the world, and in carrying the whole church into heaven!

3. The *glorious issue* of this whole affair, in the perfect and eternal destruction of the wicked, and in the consummate glory of the righteous. And now let us once more take a view of this building, now all is finished and the top-stone laid. It appeared in a glorious height in the apostle's time, and much more glorious in the time of Constantine, and will appear much more glorious still after the fall of Antichrist; but at the consummation of all things, it appears in an immensely more glorious height than ever before. Now it appears in its greatest magnificence, as a complete lofty structure, whose top reaches to the heaven of heavens; a building worthy of the great God, the King of kings.

And from what has been said, one may argue, that the work of redemption is the greatest of all God's works of which we have any notice, and it is the end of all his other works.—It appears plainly from what has been said, that this is the principal of all God's works of providence, and that all are subordinate to the great affair of redemption. We see that all the revolutions in the world are to subserve this grand design. This shows how much greater the work of redemption is, than the work of creation; because it is the end of it, as the use of a house is the end of the building it. But the work of redemption is the sum of all God's works of providence; all are subordinate to it: so the work of the new creation is more excellent than the old. So it ever is, that when one thing is removed by God to make way for another, the new one excels the old. Thus the temple excelled the tabernacle; the new covenant the old; the new dispensation of the gospel the dispensation of Moses; the throne of David the throne of Saul; the priesthood of Christ the priesthood of Aaron; the new Jerusalem the old; and so the new creation far excels the old.

God has used the creation for no other purpose, but to subserve the designs of this affair. To answer this end, he hath created and disposed of mankind; to this the angels, to this the earth, to this the highest heavens. God created the world to provide a spouse and a kingdom for his Son; and the setting up of the kingdom of Christ, and the spiritual marriage of the spouse to him, is what the whole creation labours and travails in pain to bring to pass. This work of redemption is so much the greatest of all the works of God, that all other works are to be looked upon either as parts of it, or appendages to it, or are some way reducible to it; and so all the decrees of God some way or other belong to that eternal covenant of

redemption which was between the Father and the Son before the foundation of the world. Every decree of God is some way or other reducible to that covenant. And seeing this work of redemption is so great, we need not wonder that the angels desire to look into it. And we need not wonder that so much is made of it in scripture, that it is so much insisted on in the histories, and prophecies, and songs of the Bible; for the work of redemption is the great subject of the whole, its doctrines, its promises, its types, its songs, its histories, and its prophecies.

II. Hence we may learn how God is the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and ending of all things. Such are the characters and titles we find often ascribed to him in scripture. Isa. xli. 4. "Who hath wrought and done it, calling the generations from the beginning? I the Lord, the first, and with the last, I am he." And particularly does the scripture ascribe such titles to God, where it speaks of providence, as it relates to, and is summed up in the great work of redemption; (as Isa. xliv. 6, 7, and xlviii. 9—12.) Therefore, when Christ reveals the future great events of providence relating to his church and people, to his disciple John, he often reveals himself under this character. Rev. i. 8. "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty." So again, verse 10, 11. "I heard behind me a great voice as of a trumpet, saying, I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last." Alpha and Omega being the names of the first and the last letters of the Greek alphabet, it signifies the same as his being the first and the last, and the beginning and the ending: as Rev. xxi. 6. "And he said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end." And so chapter xxii. 12, 13. "And behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last."

We have seen on what design God began the course of his providence in the beginning of the generations of men; and how he has all along carried things on agreeably to the same design without ever failing; and how at last the conclusion and final issue of things are to God; and therefore may well now cry out with the apostle, Rom. xi. 33, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!" and verse 36, "For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen."

We have seen how other things came to an end one after another: how states, and kingdoms, and empires, fell, and

came to nothing, even the greatest and strongest of them; we have seen how the world has been often overturned, and will be more remarkably yet; we have seen how it was first destroyed by water, and how at last it shall be utterly destroyed by fire: but yet God remains the same through all ages. He was before the beginning of this course of things, and he will be after the end of them; (Psalm cii. 25, 26.) Thus God is he *who is*, and *who was*, and *who is to come*.

We have seen, in a variety of instances, how all other gods perish. Those in the nations about Canaan, and throughout the Roman empire, are all destroyed, and their worship long since overthrown. We have heard how Antichrist, who has called himself a god on earth; how Mahomet, who claims religious honours; how all the gods of the Heathen through the world, will come to an end; and how Satan, the great dragon, that old serpent, who has set up himself as god of this world, will be cast into the lake of fire, there to suffer his complete punishment: but Jehovah remains, his kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and of his dominion there is no end. We have seen what mighty changes there have been in the world; but God is unchangeable, *the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever*.

We began at the head of the stream of divine providence, and have traced it through its various windings, till we are come to the end where it issues. As it began in God, so it ends in him. God is the infinite ocean into which it empties itself.—Providence is like a mighty wheel, whose circumference is so high that it is dreadful, with the glory of the God of Israel above upon it; as it is represented in Ezekiel's vision. We have seen the revolution of this wheel, and how, as it was from God, its return has been to God again. All the events of divine providence are like the links of a chain; the first link is from God, and the last is to him.

III. We may see by what has been said, how Christ has in all things the pre-eminence. For he is the great Redeemer; and therefore the work of redemption being the sum of God's works of providence, shows the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ, as being above all, and through all, and in all. That God intended the world for his Son's use in the affair of redemption, is one reason why he created the world by him, Eph. iii. 9—12. What has been said, shows how all the *purposes* of God are purposed in Christ; and how he is before all, and above all. All things consist in him, are governed by him, and are for him, Col. i. 15—18. God makes him his first-born, higher than the kings of the earth, and sets his throne above their thrones. God has always upheld his kingdom, when others have come to an end; that appears at last above all, however greatly opposed for so many ages. All

other kingdoms fall, but his kingdom is the last, and never gives place to any other.

We see, that whatever changes there are, and however highly Christ's enemies exalt themselves, yet he reigns in uncontrolled power and immense glory: in the end, his people are all perfectly saved and made happy, and all his enemies become his footstool.——And thus God gives the world to his Son for his inheritance.

IV. The consideration of what has been said, may greatly serve to show us the consistency, order, and beauty, of God's works of providence. If we behold events in any other view, all will look like confusion, like the tossing of waves; things will look as though one confused revolution came to pass after another, merely by blind chance, without any regular or certain end. But if we consider the events of providence in the light in which they have been set before us, and in which the scriptures set them before us, they appear an orderly series of events, all wisely directed in excellent harmony and consistence, tending all to one end. The wheels of providence are not turned round by blind chance, but are full of eyes round about, (as Ezekiel represents them,) and are guided by the Spirit of God: where the Spirit goes, they go. All God's works of providence, through all ages, meet at last, as so many lines meeting in one centre.

God's work of providence, like that of creation, is but one. The events of providence are not so many distinct, independent works; but rather so many different parts of one work, one regular scheme. They are all united, just as the several parts of one building: there are many stones, many pieces of timber, but all are so joined, and fitly formed together, that they make but one building: they have all but one foundation, and are united at last in one top-stone.

God's providence may not unfitly be compared to a large and long river, having innumerable branches, beginning in different regions, and at a great distance one from another, and all conspiring to one common issue. After their very diverse and apparent contrary courses, they all collect together, the nearer they come to their common end, and at length discharge themselves at one mouth into the same ocean. The different streams of this river are apt to appear like mere confusion to us, because of our limited sight whereby we cannot see the whole at once. A man who sees but one or two streams at a time, cannot tell what their course tends to. Their course seems very crooked, and different streams seem to run for awhile different and contrary ways; and if we view things at a distance, there seem to be innumerable obstacles and impediments in the way, as rocks and mountains, and the like, to hinder their ever uniting, and coming to the ocean; but yet if we

trace them, they all unite at last, all come to the same issue, disgorging themselves in one into the same great ocean. Not one of all the streams fail.

V. From the whole that has been said, we may strongly argue, that the scriptures are the word of God, because they alone inform us what God aims at, in his works. God doubtless is pursuing some design, and carrying on some scheme, in the various changes and revolutions which from age to age came to pass in the world. It is most reasonable to suppose, that there is some certain great design to which Providence subordinates all great successive changes in affairs. It is reasonable to suppose, that all revolutions, from the beginning of the world to the end of it, are but the various parts of the same scheme, all conspiring to bring to pass that great event which the great Creator and Governor of the world has ultimately in view; and that the scheme will not be finished, nor the design fully accomplished, and the great and ultimate event fully brought to pass, till the end of the world, and the last revolution is brought about.

Now there is nothing else that informs us what this scheme and design of God in his works is, but the holy scriptures.—Nothing else pretends to set in view the whole series of God's works of providence from beginning to end, and to inform us how all things were from God at first, for what end they are, how they were ordered from the beginning, how they will proceed to the end of the world, what they will come to at last, and how then all things shall be to God. Nothing else but the scriptures has any pretence for showing any manner of regular scheme or drift in those revolutions which God orders from age to age. Nothing else pretends to show what God would effect by the things which he has done, is doing, and will do; what he seeks and intends by them. Nothing else pretends to show, with any distinctness or certainty, how the world began, or to tell us the true original of things. Nothing but the scriptures set forth how God governed the world from the beginning of the generations of men upon the earth, in an orderly history; and nothing else sets before us how he will govern it to the end, by an orderly prophecy of future events; agreeable to the challenge which God makes to the gods, and prophets, and teachers of the Heathen, in Isa. xli. 22, 23. "Let them bring them forth, and shew us what shall happen: let them shew the former things what they be, that we may consider them, and know the latter end of them; or declare us things for to come. Shew the things that are to come hereafter, that we may know that ye are gods."

Reason shows, that it is fit and requisite, that the intelligent and rational beings of the world should know something of God's scheme and design in his works: for they doubtless

are principally concerned. God's great design in his works, is doubtless concerning his reasonable creatures, rather than brute beasts and lifeless things. The revolutions by which God's great design is brought to pass, are doubtless chiefly among them, and concern their state, and not the state of things without life or reason. And therefore surely it is requisite, that they should know something of it; especially since reason teaches, that God has given his rational creatures a capacity of seeing him in his works; for this end, that they may see God's glory in them, and give him that glory. But how can they see God's glory in his works, if they do not know what his design in them is, and what he aims at by what he is doing in the world?

Further, it is fit that mankind should be somewhat informed of God's design in the government of the world, because they are made capable of actively falling in with that design, of promoting it, and acting herein as his friends and subjects. It is therefore reasonable to suppose, that God has given mankind some revelation to inform them of this: but there is nothing else that does it but the Bible. In the Bible this is done. Here we may learn the first original of things, and have an orderly account of the scheme of God's works from the beginning, through those ages that are beyond the reach of all other histories. Here we are told what God aims at in the whole, what is the great end, how he has contrived the grand design, and the great things he would accomplish.—Here we have a most rational excellent account of this matter, worthy of God, and exceedingly shewing forth the glory of his perfections, his majesty, his wisdom, his glorious holiness, grace, and love; and his exaltation above all, as the first and the last.

Here we are shown the various parts of the work of providence, and how all are connected together in a regular, beautiful, and glorious frame. In the Bible, we have an account of the whole scheme of providence, from the beginning of the world to the end of it, either in history or prophecy, and are told what will become of things at last; how they will issue in the subduing of God's enemies, and in the salvation and glory of his church, and setting up of the everlasting kingdom of his Son.

How rational, worthy, and excellent a revelation is this! and how excellent a book is the Bible, which contains so much beyond all other books in the world! and what characters are here of its being indeed a divine book! a book that the great Jehovah has given to mankind for their instruction, without which we should be left in miserable darkness and confusion.

VI. From what has been said, we may see the glorious *majesty* and *power* of God in this affair of redemption. His

glorious power appears in upholding his church for so long a time, and carrying on this work; upholding it oftentimes when it was but as a little spark, or as smoking flax, in which the fire was almost extinct, and the powers of earth and hell combined to destroy it. Yet God has never suffered them to quench it, and finally will bring forth judgment unto victory. God glorifies his strength in his church's weakness; in causing his people, who are like a number of little infants, finally to triumph over all earth and hell; so that they shall tread on the lion and adder: the young lion and dragon shall they trample under foot. The glorious power of God appears in conquering his many and mighty enemies by that person who was once an infant in a manger, and appeared as a poor, weak, despised man. He conquers them and triumphs over them in their own weapon, the cross.

The glorious majesty of God appears in conquering all those mighty enemies of the church one age after another; in conquering Satan, that proud and strong spirit, and all his hellish host; in bringing him down under foot, long after he had vaunted himself as god of this world, and when he did his utmost to support himself in his kingdom. Christ, our Michael, has overcome him, the devil was cast out, and there was found no more place for him in heaven; but he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.—He is conquered in that kingdom wherein his pride, and subtilty, and cruelty, above all appears, *viz.* the kingdom of Antichrist. And the glorious power of God appears in thus conquering the devil, and bringing him under foot, after long time given him to strengthen himself to his utmost. He was once overthrown in his Heathen Roman empire, after he had been making himself strong in those parts of the world, ever since the building of Babel. It appears also in overthrowing his kingdom more fatally and universally all over the world, after he had another opportunity to strengthen himself to his utmost for many ages, by setting up those two great kingdoms of Antichrist and Mahomet, and to establish his interest in the Heathen world. We have seen how these kingdoms of God's enemies look strong, as though it was impossible to overthrow them; yet, when God appears, they seem to melt away, as the fat of lambs before the fire, and are driven away as the chaff before the whirlwind.

Those mighty kingdoms of Antichrist and Mahomet, which have made such a figure for so many ages, and have trampled the world under foot, when God comes to appear, will vanish away like a shadow, and will disappear of themselves, as the darkness in a room does, when the light is brought in. What are God's enemies in his hands? How is

their greatest strength weakness when he rises up! and how weak will they all appear together at the day of judgment! Thus we may apply those words in the song of Moses, Exod. xv. 6. "Thy right hand, O Lord, is become glorious in power: thy right hand, O Lord, hath dashed in pieces the enemy." And how great doth the majesty of God appear in overturning the world from time to time, to accomplish his designs, and at last in causing the earth and heavens to flee away, for the advancement of the glory of his kingdom!

VII. From what has been said, we may see the glorious *wisdom* of God. It shows the wisdom of God in creating the world, in that he has created it for such an excellent use, to accomplish in it so glorious a work. And it shows the wisdom of divine Providence, that he brings such great good out of such great evil, in making the fall and ruin of mankind, which in itself is so sorrowful and deplorable, an occasion of accomplishing such a glorious work as redemption, and of erecting such a glorious building, whose top should reach unto heaven, and of bringing his elect to a state of such unspeakable happiness. And how glorious doth the wisdom of God appear in that long course and series of great changes in the world, in bringing such order out of confusion, in so frustrating the most subtle machinations, and in causing the greatest works of Satan, those in which he has most glorified himself, to be wholly turned into occasions of so much the more glorious triumph of his Son Jesus Christ! And how wonderful is the wisdom of God, in bringing all such manifold and various changes and overturnings in the world to such a glorious period at last, and in so directing all the wheels of providence by his skilful hand, that every one of them conspires, as the manifold wheels of a most curious machine, at last to strike out such an excellent issue, such a manifestation of the divine glory, such happiness to his people, and such a glorious and everlasting kingdom to his Son!

VIII. From what has been said, we may see the stability of God's *mercy* and *faithfulness* to his people; how he never forsakes his inheritance, and remembers his covenant to them through all generations. Now we may see what reason there was for the words of the text, "The moth shall eat them up like a garment, and the worm shall eat them like wool; but my righteousness shall endure for ever and ever, and my salvation from generation to generation." And now we may see abundant reason for that name of God which he reveals to Moses, Exod. iii. 14. "And God said unto Moses, *I am that I am*;" i. e. I am the same that I was when I entered into covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and ever shall be the same: I shall keep covenant for ever: I am self-sufficient, all-sufficient, and immutable.

And now we may see the truth of Psa. xxxvi. 5, 6. "Thy mercy, O Lord, is in the heavens: and thy faithfulness reacheth unto the clouds. Thy righteousness is like the great mountains; thy judgments are a great deep." And if we consider what has been said, we need not wonder that the Psalmist, in the 136th Psalm, so often repeats this, *For his mercy endureth for ever:* as if he were in an ecstacy at the consideration of the perpetuity of God's mercy to his church, delighted to think of it, and knew not how but continually to express it. Let us with like pleasure and joy celebrate the everlasting duration of God's mercy and faithfulness to his church and people, and let us be comforted by it under all the dark circumstances of the church of God, and all the uproar and confusions that are in the world, and all the threatenings of the church's enemies. And let us take encouragement earnestly to pray for those glorious things which God has promised to accomplish for his church.

IX. Hence we may learn how *happy* a society the church of Christ is. For all this great work is for them. Christ undertook it for their sakes, and for their sakes he carries it on; it is because he has loved them with an everlasting love. For their sakes he overturns states and kingdoms. For their sakes he shakes heaven and earth. He gives men for them, and people for their life. Since they have been precious in God's sight they have been honourable; and therefore he first gives the blood of his own Son, and then, gives the blood of all their enemies, many thousands and millions, all nations that stand in their way, as a sacrifice to their good.

For their sakes he made the world, and for their sakes he will destroy it; for their sakes he built heaven, and for their sakes he makes his angels ministering spirits. Therefore the apostle says, 1 Cor. iii. 21, &c. "All things are yours: whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours." How blessed is this people who are redeemed from among men, and are the first fruits unto God, and to the Lamb; who have God in all ages for their protection and help! Deut. xxxiii. 29. "Happy art thou, O Israel; who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord, the shield of thy help, and who is the sword of thy excellency! and thine enemies shall be found liars unto thee, and thou shalt tread upon their high places."

Let who will prevail now, let the enemies of the church exalt themselves as much as they will, these are the people that shall finally prevail. The last kingdom shall finally be theirs; the kingdom shall finally be given into their hands, and shall not be left to other people. We have seen to what a blessed issue things shall finally be brought, and what glory

they shall arrive at, and remain in possession of, for ever and ever; after all the kingdoms of the world are come to an end, and the earth is removed, and mountains are carried into the depth of the sea, or where the sea was, and this lower earth shall all be dissolved. O happy people, and blessed society! Well may they spend an eternity in praises and hallelujahs to him who hath loved them, and will love them to eternity.

X. And, lastly, hence all wicked men, all that are in a Christless condition, may see their exceeding *misery*. You that are such, whoever you are, shall have no part or lot in this matter. You are never the better for any of these things; yea, your guilt is but so much the greater, and the misery you are exposed to so much the more dreadful. You are some of those against whom God, in the progress of the work, exercises so much manifest wrath; some of those enemies who are liable to be made Christ's footstool, to be ruled with a rod of iron, and to be dashed in pieces. You are some of the seed of the serpent, to bruise the head of which is one great design of all this work. Whatever glorious things God accomplishes for his church, they will not be glorious to you. The most glorious times of the church are always the most dismal to the wicked and impenitent. (Isa. lxvi. 14.)——And so we find, wherever glorious things are foretold concerning the church, there terrible things are foretold concerning the wicked, its enemies. So it ever has been in remarkable deliverances wrought for the church; there has been also a remarkable execution of wrath upon its enemies. When God delivered the children of Israel out of Egypt; at the same time he remarkably poured out his wrath on Pharaoh and the Egyptians. When he brought them into Canaan by Joshua, and gave them that good land, he remarkably executed wrath upon the Canaanites. When they were delivered out of their Babylonish captivity, signal vengeance was inflicted on the Babylonians. When the Gentiles were called, and the elect of God were saved by the preaching of the apostles, Jerusalem and the persecuting Jews were destroyed in a most awful manner. I might observe the same concerning the glory accomplished to the church in the days of Constantine, at the overthrow of Satan's visible kingdom in the downfall of Antichrist, and at the day of judgment. In all these instances, and especially in the last, there have been, or will be, exhibited most awful tokens of the divine wrath against the wicked.

God will indeed make use of you in this affair; but it will be for the glory of his justice, and not of his mercy. The enemies of God are reserved for the triumph of Christ's glorious power in overcoming and punishing them. You are some of those who shall be consumed with this accursed world after the day of judgment, when Christ and his church shall triumph-

antly and gloriously ascend to heaven.—Therefore let all who are in a Christless condition seriously consider these things, and not be like the foolish people of the old world, who would not take warning, when Noah told them, that the Lord was about to bring a flood of waters upon the earth; or like the people of Sodom, who would not regard when Lot told them, that God would destroy that city, and would not flee from the wrath to come, and so were consumed in that terrible destruction.

And now I would say, to conclude my whole discourse on this subject, "These sayings are faithful and true, and blessed is he that keepeth these sayings. Behold, Christ cometh quickly, and his reward is with him, to render to every man according as his work shall be. And he that is unjust, shall be unjust still; and he that is filthy, shall be filthy still; and he that is holy, shall be holy still. Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city; for without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie. He that testifieth these things, saith, Surely I come quickly.—Amen; even so come, Lord Jesus."

AN

HUMBLE ATTEMPT

TO PROMOTE

EXPLICIT AGREEMENT AND VISIBLE UNION

OF

GOD'S PEOPLE,

IN

EXTRAORDINARY PRAYER,

FOR THE

REVIVAL OF RELIGION AND THE ADVANCEMENT OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM ON EARTH.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE following is the original Title more at large, which the Editors are disposed to preserve, as it contains a more particular exhibition of the nature and design of the work. How suitable the work itself is, in reference to the present state of things, we leave to the reader's own reflection.

"*An* HUMBLE ATTEMPT *to promote an explicit* agreement *and visible* union *of God's people through the world*, in extraordinary PRAYER, *for the* REVIVAL *of* religion, *and the advancement of* Christ's kingdom *on earth, pursuant to scripture-promises and prophecies concerning the* last time,

OCCASIONED

By a late MEMORIAL published by a number of ministers in *Scotland*, and sent over to *America;* giving an account of a certain CONCERT *for prayer*,—which has already been come into by many ministers and others in *Great Britain* and some other parts, and in which they desire the *general concurrence* of their christian brethren every where.

CONTAINING

A copy of the said *memorial* with a more particular view of the *affair* it relates to; a variety of *arguments* and *persuasives* to comply with the motion therein made, for *united* and *extraordinary prayer;* and answers to some *objections*.

TOGETHER WITH

Seasonable considerations on the *aspects* of *providence* in many late wonderful dispensations, and the present state of things in the church and moral world; pointing out the *fulfilling* of the *scriptures*, and the *voice of God* to his people, in these events."

PREFACE BY A FORMER ENGLISH EDITOR.

If any enquire why the ensuing work is re-published, I would beg leave to lay before them the following intelligence.

At an association of the Ministers and Messengers of the Baptist Churches in the counties of Northampton, Leicester, &c. held at Nottingham, in the year 1784, a resolution was formed to establish through the association, *a meeting of prayer for the* general *revival and spread of religion.* This was to be observed the first Monday evening in every calendar month, by all the churches. It still continues.—In 1786, another Baptist association commonly called the *Midland*, held that year at Aulcester, in the county of Warwick, entered into the same resolution. Many other churches, particularly in Yorkshire, have adopted, and now follow the above practice. We have the pleasure also to find, that several *Pædobaptist* churches stately meet on those evenings for the same purpose.

The re-publication of the following work is with the avowed design of promoting the above agreement and practice. Those concerned in its first institution, never intended it should be confined to any peculiar connection, or particular denomination. Rather they ardently wished it might become general among the real friends of truth and holiness. The advocates of error are indefatigable in their endeavours to overthrow the distinguishing and interesting doctrines of christianity; those doctrines which are the grounds of our hope, and sources of our joy. Surely it becomes the followers of Christ, to use every effort, in order to strengthen the things which remain.

By re-publishing the following work, I do not consider myself as becoming answerable for every sentiment it contains. An *author* and an *editor* are very distinct characters. Should any entertain different views respecting some of the *prophecies* in the inspired page, from those that are here advanced yet such may, and I hope will, approve of the general design.

In the present imperfect state, we may reasonably expect a diversity of sentiments upon religious matters. Each ought to think for himself; and every one has a right, on proper occasions, to shew his opinion. Yet all should remember, that there are but two parties in the world, each engaged in opposite causes; the cause of God and of Satan; of holiness and sin; of heaven and hell. The advancement of the one, and the downfall of the other, must appear exceedingly desirable to every real friend of God and man. If such in some respects entertain different sentiments, and practise

distinguishing modes of worship, surely they may unite in the above business. O for thousands upon thousands, divided into small bands in their respective cities, towns, villages and neighbourhood, all met at the same time, and in pursuit of one end, offering up their united prayers, like so may ascending clouds of incense before the Most High!—May He shower down blessings on all the scattered tribes of Zion! Grace, great grace be with all them that love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity! Amen!

JOHN SUTCLIFF.

Olney, May 4th, 1789.

PREFACE BY THE AMERICAN EDITORS.

THE ruin of Satan's miserable kingdom, and the advancement of the universal and happy reign of Christ on the earth, were included, and hinted at, in the *sentence* denounced on the *serpent*, that *the seed of the woman shall bruise his head.* What was a *terrible threatening to Satan*, in the surprised ears of *our first guilty parents*, implied a *joyful prophecy*, to keep them from despair, and enliven their hopes, for themselves and their descendants, of obtaining by *this seed of hers* an eternal triumph over him who had so sadly foiled them. And it is likely, that their hope and faith immediately arose, laid hold on the reviving prophecy, earnestly desired its happy accomplishment, and transmitted it to their posterity.

But though this prophecy was at first only delivered in the form of a *threatening to Satan*, it was afterwards directly given in the form of a *promise to Abraham*, though still in general terms, that *in his seed should all the nations of the earth be blessed.* Yet this general promise was more clearly by degrees explained in the following ages, to mean a DIVINE KING, no other than the SON of GOD assuming *human nature* of the seed of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and David; that should be born of a virgin in Bethlehem of Judah; and at first despised, abused, rejected and put to death; but should rise to immortal life, ascend to heaven, and thence extend his blessed kingdom over all nations; not by outward force, but inward overcoming influence, by his *word* and *spirit* making them *his willing people in the day of his power;* and reigning in glorious light and holiness, love and peace, for ever; and the advancement of this universal and happy reign has been the earnest *desire* and *prayer* of the *saints* in all ages to the present day.

But how great the honour, and how lively the encouragement given in scripture to those *their prayers*, by representing them as offered by CHRIST himself with the fragrant *incense* of his own merits and intercession, on the *golden altar before the throne*, and ascending together in one grateful perfume to GOD? And how cheering to every saint is that promise, "from the rising of the sun, even to the going down of the same, my name shall be great among the Gentiles, and in every place incense shall be offered unto my name, and a pure offering?" How pleasing to GOD and all the *heavenly hosts* to see, as the sun goes round the globe, this grateful incense rising from every part on high? and the more extensive and incessant are these prayers, ascending from the circle of the earth, the more does this blessed promise go into its desired fulfilment, and the holy GOD

is more pleased and glorified. To promote the *increase* and *constancy* of these acceptable *prayers* is the great intention both of the pious *memorial* of our reverend and dear *brethren*, in Scotland, and of the worthy *author* of this exciting *essay*. And this design we cannot but recommend to all who desire the coming of this blissful *kingdom* in its promised extent and glory, in this wretched world.

As to the author's ingenious observations on the *prophecies*, we entirely leave them to the reader's judgment; with only observing, though it is the apprehension of many learned men, that there is to be a very *general slaughter of the witnesses of* CHRIST, when about finishing their testimony to the pure worship and truths of the gospel, about three or four years before the *seventh angel* sounds his trumpet for the ruin of *antichrist*;——yet we cannot see that this is any just objection against our joint and earnest *prayers* for the glorious age succeeding, or for the hastening of it.

For if such a terrible time is coming in Europe, which we in depending America are likely to share in; the more need we have of joining in earnest and constant prayers for extraordinary suffering graces for ourselves and others. And that such a time is coming on the *members* of CHRIST, is no more an objection against their *prayers* for the hastening of the following glory, than it was before the incarnation of him their head, that his most bitter sufferings were to precede the spreading of this joyous kingdom among nations. And the nearer the day approaches, the more need we have to be awakened to continual *watchfulness and prayer*.

May GOD pour out on all his people abundantly the *spirit of grace and supplications*, and prepare them for the amazing changes hastening on the earth, both for previous trials and for following glories.*

Boston, New-England, January 12, 1784.

* This preface was signed by JOSEPH SEWELL, THOMAS PRINCE, JOHN WEBB, THOMAS FOXCROFT, and JOSHUA GEE.

AN

HUMBLE ATTEMPT, &c.

ZECH. viii. 20, 21, 22.

Thus saith the LORD *of hosts, It shall yet come to pass, that there shall come people, and the inhabitants of many cities; and the inhabitants of one city shall go unto another saying, Let us go speedily to pray before the* LORD, *and to seek the* LORD *of hosts. I will go also. Yea, many people and strong nations shall come to seek the* LORD *of hosts in Jerusalem, and to pray before the* LORD.

PART I.

THE TEXT OPENED, AND AN ACCOUNT GIVEN OF THE AFFAIR PROPOSED IN THE MEMORIAL FROM SCOTLAND.

SECT. I.

Explanatory Introduction.

IN this chapter we have a prophecy of a future glorious advancement of the church of God; wherein it is evident that something further is intended than ever were fulfilled to the Jewish nation under the Old Testament. For here are plain prophecies of such things as never were fulfilled before the coming of the Messiah: Particularly, what is said in the two last verses in the chapter, of "many people and strong nations

worshipping and seeking the true God;" and of so great an accession of Gentile nations to the church of God, that by far the greater part of the visible worshippers should consist of this new accession, so that they should be to the other as *ten to one*.—A certain number for an uncertain. There never happened any thing, from the time of the prophet Zechariah to the coming of Christ, to answer this prophecy: And it can have no fulfilment but either, in the calling of the Gentiles, in and after the days of the apostles; or, in the future glorious enlargement of the church of God in the *latter ages* of the world, so often foretold by the prophets of the Old Testament, and by the prophet Zechariah in particular, in the latter part of his prophecy. It is most probable, that what the spirit of God has chiefly respect to, is that *last* and greatest enlargement and most glorious advancement of the church of God on earth; in the benefits of which especially the Jewish nation were to have a share, a very eminent and distinguished share.

There is a great agreement between what is here said, and other prophecies that *must* manifestly have respect to the church's latter-day-glory: As Isai. lx. 2—4. "The Lord shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee: And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising. Lift up thine eyes round about and see; all they gather themselves together, they come to thee." That whole chapter, beyond all dispute, has respect to the most glorious state of the church of God on earth. So chap. lxvi. 8. "Shall the earth be made to bring forth in one day? Shall a nation be born at once?" ver. 10. "Rejoice ye with Jerusalem, and be glad with her, all ye that love her." ver. 12. "I will extend peace to her like a river, and the glory of the Gentiles like a flowing stream."—Mich. iv. 1, &c. "But in the last day it shall come to pass, that the mountain of the house of the Lord shall be established in the top of the mountain, and it shall be exalted above the hills, and people shall flow unto it; and many nations shall come and say, come, and let us go up unto the mountain of the Lord, and to the house of the God of Jacob.—And he shall judge among many people, and rebuke strong nations afar off; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more." See also *Isai.* ii. at the beginning.—There has been nothing yet brought to pass, in any measure, to answer these prophecies. And as the prophecy in my text, and the following verse, agrees with them, so there is reason to think it has a respect to the same times. And indeed there is a remarkable agreement in the description given throughout the chapter,

with the representations made of those times elsewhere in the prophets*.

So that however the prophet, in some parts of this chapter, may have respect to future smiles of heaven on the Jewish nation, lately returned from the Babylonish captivity, and resettled in the land of Canaan, in a great increase of their numbers and wealth, and the return of more captives from Chaldea and other countries, &c. yet the spirit of God has doubtless respect to things far *greater* than these, and of which these were but faint resemblances. We find it common in the prophecies of the old testament, that when the prophets are speaking of divine favours and blessings on the Jews, attending or following their return from the Babylonish captivity, the spirit of God takes occasion from thence to speak of the incomparably greater blessings on the church, that shall attend and follow her deliverance from the spiritual or mystical Babylon, of which those were a type; and then speaks almost wholly of these latter and vastly greater things, so as to seem to forget the former.

And whereas the prophet, in this chapter, speaks of God "bringing his people again from the east and west to Jerusalem, (ver. 7, 8.) and multitudes of all nations taking hold of the skirts of the Jews;" so far as this means literally that nation of the posterity of Jacob, it cannot chiefly respect any return of the Jews from Babylon and other countries, in those ancient times before Christ; for no such things attended any such return. It must therefore have respect to the great calling and gathering of the Jews into the fold of Christ, and their being received to the blessings of his kingdom, after the fall of Antichrist, or the destruction of mystical Babylon.

SECT. II.

Observations on the Text.

In the text we have an account *how* this future glorious advancement of the church of God should be introduced; *viz.* By great multitudes in different towns and countries taking up a *joint resolution*, and coming into an express and *visible agreement*, that they will, by united and extraordinary *prayer*, seek to God, that he would come and manifest himself, and

* As may be seen by comparing ver. 3, with Isai. lx. 14—ver. 4, with Isai. lxv. 20, 22, and xxxiii. 24.—ver. 6, 7, 8, with Ezek. xxxvii. 2, 11, 12, 21—ver. 7, with Isai. xliii. 5, 6, and xlix. 12, and lix. 19.—ver. 12, 13, with Hos. ii. 21, 22, and Ezek. xxxiv. 22—29, ver. 8, 12, 13, with Ezek. xxxvi. 28—30,—ver. 13, with Zeph. iii. 20, and Isa. xix. 24.—ver. 19, with Isai. lxi. 3, and Jer. xxxi. 12, 13, 14.

grant the tokens and fruits of his gracious presence.—Particularly we may observe,

1. The *duty*, with the attendance on which the glorious event foretold shall be brought on; *viz.* The duty of *prayer*.—Prayer, some suppose, is here to be taken *synechdochically*, for the whole of divine *worship;* prayer being a *principal part* of worship in the days of the gospel, when sacrifices are abolished. If so, this is to be understood only as a prophecy of a great *revival* of religion, and of the true worship of God among his visible people, the *accession* of others to the church, and turning of multitudes from idolatry to the worship of the true God. But it appears to me reasonable to suppose, that something more *special* is intended, with regard to the duty of prayer; considering that prayer is here expressly and repeatedly mentioned; and also considering how parallel this place is with many other prophecies, that speak of an *extraordinary* spirit of prayer, as preceding and introducing that glorious day of religious revival, and advancement of the church's peace and prosperity, so often foretold. Add to this, the agreeableness of what is here said, with what is said afterwards by the same prophet, of the *pouring out of a spirit of grace and supplication*, as that with which this great revival of religion shall begin. (Chap. xii. 10.)

2. The *good*, that shall be sought by prayer; which is GOD himself.—It is said once and again, "They shall go to pray before the Lord, and to *seek the Lord of Hosts*. This is the good they ask for, and seek by prayer, *The Lord of Hosts* himself.—To *seek God*, as the expression may perhaps be sometimes used in scripture, may signify no more than seeking the *favour* or *mercy* of God. And if it be taken so here, *praying before the Lord*, and *seeking the Lord of Hosts*, must be synonymous expressions. And it must be confessed to be a common thing in scripture, to signify the same thing repeatedly, by various expressions of the same import, for the greater emphasis.

But certainly that expression of *seeking the Lord*, is very commonly used to signify something more; it implies that *God Himself* is the great *good* desired and sought after; that the blessings pursued are God's gracious presence, the blessed manifestations of him, union and intercourse with him; or, in short, God's *manifestations* and *communications* of himself by his Holy Spirit. Thus the psalmist *desired God, thirsted after him*, and *sought him*. (Psal. lxiii. 1, 2, 8.) "O God, thou art my God; early will I *seek thee*. My flesh longeth for *thee*, in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is, to see thy power and thy glory, so as I have seen thee in the sanctuary.—My soul followeth hard after *thee*."—(Psal. lxx. iii. 25.) "Whom have I in heaven but thee? And there is none upon earth that I desire

besides thee." The psalmist earnestly pursued after GOD, *his soul thirsted after him, he stretched forth his hands unto him*, &c. (Psal. cxliii. 6.) And therefore it is in scripture the peculiar character of the saints, that they are *those who seek* GOD. (Psal. xxiv. 6.) *This is the generation of them that seek* HIM. (Psal. lxix. 32.) *Your heart shall live that seek* GOD. If the expression in the text be understood agreeably to this sense, then by *seeking the Lord of hosts*, we must understand a seeking, that God who had withdrawn, or as it were hid himself for a long time, would return to his church, and grant the tokens and fruits of his gracious presence, and those blessed communications of his spirit to his people, and to mankind on earth, which he had often promised, and which his church had long waited for.

And it seems reasonable, to understand the phrase, *seeking the Lord of hosts*, in this sense here; and not as *merely* signifying the same thing with *praying* to God: Not only because the expression is repeatedly *added* to *praying before the Lord*, in the text: but also because the phrase, taken in this sense, is exactly agreeable to other parallel prophetic representations. Thus God's people seeking, by earnest prayer, the promised restoration of the church of God, after the Babylonish captivity, and the great apostacy that occasioned it, is called their SEEKING GOD, and SEARCHING *for him;* and God's granting this promised revival and restoration is called his being FOUND *of them.* Jer. xxix. 10, 14. "For thus saith the Lord, that after seventy years be accomplished at Babylon, I will visit you, and perform my good word towards you, in causing you to return to this place. For I know the thoughts that I think towards you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end. Then shall ye go and call upon me, and I will hearken unto you; and ye shall *seek me* and *find me*, when ye shall *search for me* with all your heart; and I will be *found* of you, saith the Lord, and I will turn away your captivity." And the prophets, from time to time, represent God, in a low and afflicted state of his church, as being *withdrawn*, and *hiding himself.* Isai. xlv. 15. "Verily thou art a God that hidest thyself, O God of Israel, the Saviour." (Chap. lvii. 17.) *I hid me, and was wroth.* And they represent God's people, while his church is in such a state, before God delivers and restores the same, as "seeking him, looking for him, searching and waiting for him, and calling after him." (Hos. v. 15.) "I will go and return unto my place, till they acknowledge their offence, and seek my face from the house of Jacob, and I will look for him."

And when God, in answer to their prayers and succeeding their endeavours, delivers, restores, and advances his church, according to his promise, then he is said to *answer*, and *come*,

and *say*, *here am I*, and to *shew himself;* and they are said to *find him*, and *see him plainly*. (Isai. lviii. 9.) "Then shalt thou cry, and he shall say, *here I am*." (Isai. xlv. 19.) "I said not unto the seed of Jacob, *seek ye me*, in vain." (Chap. xxv. 8, 9.) "The Lord will wipe away the tears from off all faces, and the rebuke of his people shall he take away from off the earth.—And it shall be said in that day, Lo this is our God, we have waited for him, and he will save us: This is the Lord, we have *waited* for *him;* we will be glad, and rejoice in his salvation." Together with the next chap. ver. 8, 9. we have waited for thee; "the desire of our soul is to thy name, and to the remembrance of thee. With my soul have I desired thee in the night; yea, with my spirit within me will I *seek thee* early. For when thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness." Isai. lii. 6,—8. "Therefore my people shall know my name; therefore they shall know in that day, that I am he that doth speak: *behold, it is I.* How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace, that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation, that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth! Thy watchmen shall lift up the voice, together shall they sing; for they shall see eye to eye, when the Lord shall bring again Zion."

3. We may observe *who* they are, that shall be *united* in thus seeking the Lord of hosts: *the inhabitants of many cities*, and of many countries, *yea many people and strong nations*, great multitudes in different parts of the world shall conspire in this business. From the representation made in the prophecy, it appears rational to suppose, that it will be fulfilled something after this manner:—There shall be given much of a spirit of prayer to God's people, in many places, disposing them to come into an express *agreement*, unitedly to pray to God in an extraordinary manner that he would appear for the help of his church, and in mercy to mankind, and *pour out his spirit*, *revive his work*, and advance his spiritual *kingdom* in the world, as he has promised. This disposition to prayer and union in it, will gradually spread more and more and increase to greater degrees; with which at length will gradually be introduced a *revival* of *religion*, and a disposition to greater engagedness in the worship and service of God amongst his professing people. This being observed, will be the means of awakening others, making them sensible of the wants of their souls and exciting in them a great concern for their spiritual and everlasting good, and putting them upon earnestly crying to God for spiritual mercies, and disposing them to join in that extraordinary seeking and serving of God.

In this manner *religion* shall be *propagated*, till the awa-

kening reaches those that are in the *highest stations*, and till *whole nations* be awakened, and there be at length an accession of many of the chief nations of the world to the church of God. Thus after the inhabitants of many cities of Israel, or of God's professing people, have taken up and pursued a joint resolution to go and pray before the Lord, and seek the Lord of hosts, others shall be drawn to worship and serve him with them; till at length *many people and strong nations* shall join themselves to them; and there shall, in process of time, be a vast accession to the church, so that it shall be *ten* times as large as it was before; yea, at length all nations shall be converted unto God. Thus (Zech. viii. 23.) "ten men shall take hold, out of all languages of the nations, of the skirt of him that is a Jew," (in the sense of the apostle, Rom. ii. 28, 29.) "saying, We will go with you; for we have heard, that God is with you." And thus shall be fulfilled, Psal. lxv. 2. "O thou that hearest prayer, *unto thee shall all flesh come.*"

4. We may observe the *mode* of their *union* in this duty. It is a *visible* union, an union by *explicit agreement*, a joint resolution declared by one to another, being first proposed by some and readily and expressly followed by others. The inhabitants of *one city* shall apply themselves to the inhabitants of *another*, saying, *let us go*, &c. Those to whom the motion is made shall *comply* with it, the proposal shall take with *many*, it shall be a *prevailing spreading* thing; one shall follow another's example, one and another shall say, *I will go also.* Some suppose that those words, *I will go also*, are to be taken as the words of him that makes the proposal; as much as to say, I do not propose *that* to you which I am not willing to do myself. I desire *you* to go, and am ready to go *with you.* But this is to suppose no more to be expressed in these latter words than was expressed before in the proposal itself; for these words, *let us go*, signify as much. It seems to me much more natural to understand these latter words as importing the *consent* of those to whom the proposal is made, or the *reply* of one and another that falls in with it. This is much more agreeable to the plain design of the text, which is to represent the *concurrence* of great numbers in this affair; and more agreeable to the representation made in the next verse, of one following another, many *taking hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew.*

And though if the words be thus understood we must suppose an *ellipsis* in the text, something understood that is not expressed, as if it had been said, *those of other cities shall say*, I will go also; yet this is not difficult to be supposed, for such *ellipses* are very common in scripture. We have one exactly parallel with it in Jer. iii. 22. "Return, ye backsliding children, and I will heal your backslidings; behold we come unto thee;

for thou art the Lord our God," i. e. the backsliding children shall say, "Behold we come unto thee," &c. And in Cant. iv. 16. and v. 1. "Let my beloved come into his garden, and eat his pleasant fruits. I am come into my garden, my sister, my spouse," i. e. her beloved shall say, "I am come into my garden." We have the like throughout that song. So Psal. l. 6, 7. "The heavens shall declare his righteousness; for God is Judge himself, hear, O my people, and I will speak," i. e. the Judge shall say, "hear, O my people," &c. So Psal. lxxxii. 1, 2.—The psalms and prophets abound with such figures of speech.

5. We may observe the *manner of prayer* agreed on, or the manner in which they agree to *engage in and perform the duty*. *Let us go* SPEEDILY *to pray;* or, as it is in the margin, Let us go *continually*. The words literally translated are, *Let us go in going*. Such an ingemination, or doubling of words, is very common in the Hebrew language when it is intended that a thing shall be very *strongly* expressed. It generally implies the *superlative degree* of a thing; as the *holy of holies* signifies the most holy. But it commonly denotes, not only the utmost *degree* of a thing, but also the utmost *certainty;* as when God said to Abraham "in multiplying I will multiply thy seed," (Gen. xxii. 17.) it implies both that God would *certainly* multiply his seed, and also multiply it *exceedingly*. So when God said to Adam, "In the day that thou eatest thereof, in dying thou shalt die" (as the words are in the original,) it implies both that he should *surely die*, and also that he should die most *terribly*, should utterly perish, and be destroyed to the utmost degree.

In short, as this ingemination of words in the Hebrew generally denotes the strength of expression, so it is used to signify almost all those things that are wont to be signified by the various forms of strong speech in other languages. It signifies not only the utmost *degree* of a thing; and its great *certainty;* but also the *peremptoriness* and *terribleness* of a threatening, the *greatness* and *positiveness* of a promise, the *strictness* of a command, and the *earnestness* of a request. When God says to Adam, *Dying thou shalt die*, it is equivalent to such strong expressions in English, as, *Thou shalt die surely or indeed;* or, *Thou shalt die with a witness*. So when it is said in the text, "Let us go in going, and pray before the Lord," the strength of the expression represents the *earnestness* of those that make the proposal, their great *engagedness* in the affair. And with respect to the *duty* proposed, it may be understood to signify that they should be *speedy*, *fervent*, and *constant* in it; or, in one word, that it should be *thoroughly* performed.

6. We may learn from the tenor of this prophecy, together with the context, that this union in such prayer is foretold

as a *becoming* and *happy* thing, what would be acceptable to God and attended with glorious success.

From the whole we may infer, that it is a very *suitable* thing and *well-pleasing to God*, for many people in different parts of the world, by express *agreement*, to come into a *visible union*, in extraordinary, speedy, fervent, and constant *prayer*, for those great effusions of the *Holy Spirit* which shall bring on that *advancement* of Christ's church and kingdom, that God has so often promised shall be in the *latter ages* of the world. And so from hence I would infer the *duty* of God's people, with regard to the *Memorial* lately sent over into *America* from *Scotland*, by a number of ministers there, proposing a *method* for such an *union* as has been spoken of, in extraordinary prayer for this great mercy.

And it being the special design of this discourse to persuade such as are friends to the interests of Christ's kingdom, to a *compliance* with the proposal and request made in that *Memorial*, I shall, First, give a short *historical* account of the *affair* to which it relates, from letters, papers and pamphlets, that have come over from Scotland. Secondly, I shall annex the *memorial* itself. And then I shall offer some *arguments* and *motives*, tending to induce the friends of religion to fall in with what is proposed; and lastly, make answer to some *objections* that may possibly be made against it.

SECT. III.

An historical Account of the Concert to which the Memorial relates.

In October, A.D. 1744, a number of ministers in Scotland, taking into consideration the state of God's church and of the world of mankind, judged that the providence of God, at such a day, did loudly call upon such as were concerned for the welfare of Zion, to *united extraordinary* applications to the God of all grace, suitably acknowledging him as the fountain of all the spiritual benefits and blessings of his church, and earnestly praying to him, that he would *appear in his glory* and favour Zion, and manifest his compassion to the world of mankind by an abundant effusion of his *Holy Spirit* on all the churches, and the whole habitable earth, to revive true religion in all parts of *Christendom*, and to deliver *all nations* from their great and manifold spiritual calamities and miseries, and bless them with the unspeakable benefits of the kingdom of our glorious Redeemer, and *fill* the *whole earth with his glory*. Consulting one another on the subject, they looked upon *themselves*, for their own part, obliged

to engage in this duty; and, as far as in them lay, to persuade *others* to the same: and to endeavour to find out and fix on some *method* that should most effectually tend to promote and uphold such extraordinary application to heaven among God's people.

After seeking to God by prayer for direction, they determined on the following method as what they would conform to in their own practice, and propose to be practised by others, for the *two years* next following, viz. To set apart some time on *Saturday evening* and *Sabbath morning*, every week, for the purpose aforesaid, as other duties would allow to every one respectively; and more solemnly the first Tuesday of each quarter, (beginning with the first Tuesday of November, then next ensuing) either the whole day or part of the day, as persons find themselves disposed or think their circumstances will allow the time to be spent either in *private* praying societies, or in *public* meetings, or alone in *secret*, as shall be found most practicable or judged most convenient, by such as are willing in some way or other to join in this affair. Not that any should make promises, or be looked upon as under strict bonds in any respect, constantly and without fail to observe every one of these days, whatever their circumstances should be, or however other duties and necessary affairs might interfere; or that persons should look upon themselves bound with regard to these days in any wise as though the time were holy, or the setting of them apart for religious purposes were established by sacred authority. But yet, as a proper guard against negligence and unsteadiness, and a prudent preservative from yielding to a disposition—to which persons might be liable through the prevalence of indolence and listlessness—to excuse themselves on trivial occasions, it was proposed that those who united in this affair should resolve with themselves, that if, by urgent business or otherwise, they were hindered from joining with others on the very day agreed on, yet they would not wholly neglect bearing their part in the duty proposed, but would take the first convenient day following for that purpose.

The reason why *Saturday evening* and *Lord's day morning* were judged most convenient for the *weekly* seasons, was that these times being so near the time of dispensing *gospel ordinances* through the christian world, which are the great means in the use of which God is wont to grant his *Spirit* to mankind, and the principal means that the Spirit of God makes use of to carry on his *work of grace*, it may be well supposed that the minds of christians in general will at these seasons be especially disengaged from secular affairs, and disposed to pious meditations and the duties of devotion, and more naturally led to seek the communications of the Holy Spirit and

success of the means of grace.—And as to the the *quarterly* times, it was thought helpful to memory that they should be on one or other of the *first* days of each quarter: Tuesday was preferred to Monday, because in some places people might have public prayers and a sermon on the stated day, which might not be so convenient on Monday as on some day at a greater distance from the Sabbath.

It was reckoned a *chief use* of such an agreement and method as this, that it would be a good expedient for maintaining and keeping up, amongst the people of God, the great christian duty of *prayerfulness for the coming of Christ's kingdom.* Those things to which we are too little inclined, through sloth, carnality, or a fulness of our own worldly and private concerns—and which are to be attended to at some seasons or other, but have no special seasons stated for them, are apt to be *forgotten*, or put *off* from time to time, and as it were adjourned *without a day.* But when we fix on certain seasons which we resolve, unless extraordinarily hindered, to devote to the duty, it tends to prevent forgetfulness and a settled negligence of it. The certain returns of the season will naturally refresh the memory; will tend to put us in mind of the precept of Christ, and the obligations that lie on all his followers, to abound in such a *duty*, and renewedly engage us to the consideration of the importance, necessity and unspeakable value of the *mercy* sought; and so, by frequent renovation, to keep alive the consideration and sense of these things at *all times.*

Thus the first promoters of this *agreement* judged, that it would be subservient to more abundant *prayerfulness* for effusions of the holy spirit *at all times* through the *year*, both in secret and social worship; particularly as to this last, in congregations, families, and other praying societies. And they also judged, that such an *agreed union* would tend to *animate* and *encourage* God's people in the duty proposed; and that particular persons and societies, knowing that great multitudes of their fellow christians, in so many distant places, were at the *same time* (as a token of the union of their hearts with them in this affair) by agreement engaged in the *same holy exercise*, would naturally be *enlivened* in the duty by such a consideration.

It was not thought best to propose, at first, a longer time for the continuance of *this* precise method than *two years;* it being considered that it is not possible, before any trial, so well to judge of the *expedience* of a particular *method*, and certain *circumstances* of managing such an affair, as after some time of experience. And it was not known but that after long consideration, and some trial, it might be thought best to *alter* some circumstances; or whether others that had not yet been con-

sulted, might not propose a *better* method. The time *first* agreed on, though but short, was thought sufficient to give opportunity for judgment and experience, and for such as were disposed to unite in an affair of such a nature, in distant places, mutually to communicate their sentiments on the subject.

The *way* which those who first projected and came into this agreement, thought best for giving *notice* of it and proposing it to *others*, was not by the *press;* but by *personal conversation* with such as they could conveniently have immediate access to, and by *private correspondence*, with others at a distance. At first it was intended, that some *formal paper* proposing the matter should be sent about for proper amendments and improvements, and then concurrence: but on more mature deliberation, it was considered how this might give a handle to *objections* (which they thought it best to the utmost to avoid in the *infancy* of the affair) and how practicable it was, without any such formality, to spread the substance of the proposal by private *letters*, together with a request to their correspondents mutually to communicate their thoughts. Therefore this was fixed on as the preferable method at the beginning. Accordingly, they proposed and endeavoured to promote the affair in this way; and with such success, that great numbers in Scotland and England fell in with the proposal, and some in North America. As to Scotland, it was complied with by numbers in the four chief towns, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Aberdeen, and Dundee, and many country towns and congregations in various parts of the land. One of the ministers who was primarily concerned in this affair, in a letter to one of his correspondents, speaks of an explicit declaration of the concurrence of the praying societies in Edinburgh, which they had made in a letter. The number of the praying societies in that city is very considerable. Mr. Robe, of Kilsyth (in a letter to Mr. Prince of Boston, dated Nov. 3, 1743,) says there were then above *thirty* societies of *young* people there newly erected, some of which consisted of upwards of *thirty* members. As to Glasgow, this union was unanimously agreed to by about *forty-five* praying societies there; as an eminent minister in that city informs in a letter.

The *two years* first agreed on ended last November. A little before this time expired, a number of ministers in Scotland agreed on a *memorial* to be printed and sent abroad to their brethren in various parts, proposing to them, and requesting of them, to join in the continuance of this method of united prayer, and in endeavouring to promote it. Copies of which memorial have lately been sent over to New-England, (to the number of near 500,) directed to be distributed in almost every country in this province of the Massachusetts-Bay, and also in several parts of Connecticut, New Hampshire, Rhode Island,

New-York, New-Jersey, Pennsylvania, Maryland, Virginia, Carolina and Georgia. Most of these, I suppose, were sent to one of the congregational ministers in Boston, with a letter subscribed by twelve ministers in Scotland, about the affair:—many of them to another of the said ministers of Boston; and some to a minister in Connecticut.—It being short, I shall here insert a copy of it at length.

SECT. IV.

A MEMORIAL *from several ministers in* Scotland, *to their brethren in different places, for continuing a* Concert for Prayer, *first entered into in the year* 1744.

Whereas it was the chief scope of this *concert* to promote more abundant application to a duty that is perpetually binding, *prayer that our Lord's kingdom may come*, joined with *praises:* and it contained some circumstantial expedients, apprehended to be very subservient to that design, relating to stated times for such exercises, so far as this would not interfere with other duties; particularly a part of *Saturday evening* and *Sabbath morning*, every week; and more solemnly of some one of the *first days* of each of the four great divisions of the year, that is, of each *quarter;* as the first *Tuesday* or first convenient day after;* and the concert, as to this circumstance, was extended only to *two years;* it being intended that before these expired, persons engaged in the *concert* should reciprocally communicate their sentiments and inclinations as to the *prolonging* of the time, with or without alteration, as to the circumstance mentioned: and it was intended by the first promoters, that others at a *distance* should propose such circumstantial *amendments* or *improvements* as they should find proper: it is hereby earnestly intreated that such would communicate their sentiments accordingly, now that the time first proposed is near expiring.

II. To induce those already engaged to adhere, and others to accede to this concert, it seems of importance to observe that *declarations of concurrence*, the communicating and spreading of which are so evidently useful, are to be understood in such a *latitude*, as to keep at the greatest distance from *entangling* men's minds: not as binding men to set apart any stated days from secular affairs, or even to fix on any part of such and such precise days, whether it be *convenient* or not;

* The meaning is, the first *Tuesdays* of *February, May, August*, and *November*, or the first convenient days after these.

not as *absolute* promises in any respect, but as *friendly harmonious resolutions*, with liberty to alter circumstances as shall be found expedient. On account of all which latitude, and that the circumstantial part extends only to a few years, it is apprehended the *concert* cannot be liable to the objections against *periodical* religious times of human appointment.

III. It is also humbly offered to the consideration of ministers, and others furnished with gifts for the most public instructions, whether it might not be of great use, by the blessing of God, if short and nervous scriptural *persuasives* and *directions to the duty in view*, *were composed and published* (either by particular authors, or several joining together; which last way might some times have peculiar advantages) *and that from time to time*, without too great intervals; the better to keep alive on men's minds a just sense of the obligations to a duty so important in itself, and in which many may be in danger to faint and turn remiss, without such repeated incitements: and *whether it would not also be of great use*, *if ministers would be pleased to preach frequently on the importance and necessity of prayer for the coming of our Lord's kingdom;* particularly near the quarterly days, or on these days themselves, where there is public worship at that time.

IV. They who have found it incumbent on them to publish this *memorial* at this time, having peculiar advantages for spreading it, do intreat that the desire of *concurrence* and *assistance* contained in it may by no means be understood as restricted to any particular *denomination* or *party*, or to those who are of such or such opinions about any former instances of remarkable religious concern; but to be extended to *all* who shall vouchsafe any attention to this paper, and have at heart the interest of *vital christianity* and the *power of godliness;* and who, however differing about other things, are convinced of the importance of fervent *prayer* to promote that common interest, and of scripture persuasives to promote such prayer.

V. As the first printed account of this *concert* was not a *proposal* of it as a thing then to begin, but a narration of it as a design *already* set on foot, which had been brought about with much harmony, by means of private *letters;* so the farther continuance, and, it is hoped, the farther spreading of it, seems in a promising way of being promoted by the same means; as importunate desires of *renewing the concert* have been transmitted already from a very distant corner abroad, where the regard to it has of late increased: but notwithstanding what may be done by private letters, it is humbly expected that a *memorial* spread in this manner, may, by

God's blessing, farther promote the good ends in view; as it may be usefully referred to in letters, and may reach where they will not.

VI. Whereas in a valuable letter, from the corner just now mentioned, as a place where a regard to the *concert* has lately increased, it is proposed that it should be continued for *seven years*, or at least for a much longer time than what was specified in the first agreement; those concerned in this *memorial* who would wish rather to receive and spread *directions* and *proposals* on this head, than to be the first authors of any, apprehend no inconvenience, for their part, in agreeing to the *seven years* with the *latitude* above described, which reserves liberty to make such circumstantial alterations as may be hereafter found expedient: on the contrary it seems of importance, that the labour of spreading a *concert* which has already extended to so distant parts, and may, it is hoped, extend farther, may not need to be *renewed* sooner, at least much sooner; as it is uncertain but *that* may endanger the *dropping* of it; and it seems probable there will be less zeal in spreading it, if the time proposed for its continuance be too inconsiderable.—Mean time, declarations of concurrence for a *less* number of years may greatly promote the good ends in view: though it seems very expedient that it should exceed what was first agreed on; seeing it is found on trial that that time, instead of being too long, was much too short.

VII. If any person who formerly agreed to this *concert*, should now *discontinue* it; would it not look too like that *fainting in prayer*, against which we are so expressly warned in scripture? And would not this be the more unsuitable at *this time*, in any within the British dominions, when they have the united calls of such *public chastisements* and *deliverances*,* to more concern than ever about *public reformation*, and consequently about that which is the *source* of all thorough reformation, the *regenerating* and *sanctifying* influence of the Almighty *spirit* of God?—*August* 26, 1746."

N. B. The minister in Boston afore-mentioned to whom most of the copies of this *Memorial* were sent, who, I suppose, has had later and more full intelligence than I have had concerning the proposal, in a letter, "The motions seem to come from above, and to be wonderfully spreading in Scotland, England, Wales, Ireland, and in North America."

* Alluding, probably, to the Rebellion in 1745, and the defeat of the Rebels. W.

PART II.

MOTIVES TO A COMPLIANCE WITH WHAT IS PROPOSED IN THE MEMORIAL.

I now proceed to the second Thing intended in this Discourse, viz. to offer to Consideration some Things, which may tend to induce the people of God to comply with the proposal and request, made to them in the Memorial.

SECT. I.

The Latter-Day Glory not yet accomplished.

It is evident from the scripture, that there is *yet remaining* a great *advancement* of the interest of religion and the kingdom of Christ in this world, by an *abundant outpouring of the Spirit of God*, far greater and more extensive than ever yet has been. It is certain that many things, which are spoken concerning a glorious time of the church's enlargement and prosperity in the *latter days*, have never yet been fulfilled. There has never yet been any propagation and prevalence of religion in any wise, of that extent and universality which the prophecies represent. It is often foretold and signified, in a great variety of strong expressions, that there should a time come when *all nations*, throughout the whole habitable world, should embrace the true religion, and be brought into the church of God. It was often promised to the patriarchs, that *in their seed all the nations*, or (as it is sometimes expressed) *all the families of the earth shall be blessed.** Agreeably to this, it is said of the Messiah, Psal. lxxii. 11. "That all nations shall serve him;" and in ver. 17. "Men shall be blessed in him, and all nations shall call him blessed." And in Isai. ii. 2. it is said, that "all nations shall

* See Gen. xii. 3.—xviii. 18.—xxii. 18.—xxvi. 4. and xxviii. 14.

flow unto the mountain of the house of the Lord." And, Jer. iii. 17. That "all nations shall be gathered unto the name of the Lord to Jerusalem, and shall walk no more after the imagination of their evil heart. That all flesh shall come and worship before the Lord," Isai. lxvi. 23. "And that all flesh should see the glory of God together," Isai xl. 5. "And that all flesh should come to him that hears prayer," Psal. lxv. 2. Christ compares the *kingdom of heaven* in this world to "leaven which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened," Mat. xiii. 33.

It is natural and reasonable to suppose that the whole world should finally be given to Christ, as one whose right it is to reign, as the proper heir of him who is originally the King of all nations, and the possessor of heaven and earth. And the scripture teacheth us that God the Father hath constituted his Son, as God-man, in his kingdom of grace, or mediatorial kingdom, to be the *heir of the world*, that he might in this kingdom have *the heathen for his inheritance, and the utmost ends of the earth for his possession.* Heb. i. 2. and ii. 8. Psal. ii. 6, 7, 8. Thus Abraham is said to be "the heir of the world," not in himself, but in *his seed*, which is Christ, Rom. iv. 13. And how was this to be fulfilled to Abraham, but by God's fulfilling that great promise, that "in his seed all the nations of the earth should be blessed?" For that promise is what the apostle is speaking of: which shows that God has appointed Christ to be the heir of the world in his kingdom of grace, and to possess and reign over all nations, through the propagation of his gospel, and the power of his Spirit communicating the blessings of it. God hath appointed him to this universal dominion by a most solemn oath; Isai. xlv. 23. "I have sworn by myself, the word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, that unto me every knee shall bow, and every tongue shall swear." (Compared with Phil. ii. 10, 11.) Though this solemn oath of God the Father is to be understood in so comprehensive a sense, as to extend to what shall be accomplished at the day of judgment, yet it is evident by the foregoing and following verses, that the thing most directly intended, is what shall be fulfilled by spreading the gospel of his salvation, and the power of the Spirit of grace, bring *all the ends of the earth to look to him that they may be saved*, and come to him for *righteousness and strength, that in him they might be justified, and might glory.*

God has suffered many earthly princes to extend their conquests over a great part of the face of the earth, and to possess a dominion of vast extent, and one monarchy to conquer and succeed another, the latter being still the greater: it is reasonable to suppose that a much greater glory in this respect should

be reserved for Christ, God's own son and rightful heir, who has purchased the dominion by so great and hard a service: it is reasonable to suppose, that his dominion should be far the largest, and his conquests vastly the greatest and most extensive. And thus the scriptures represent the matter in Nebuchadnezzar's vision, and the prophet's interpretation, Daniel ii. There are four great monarchies of the earth, one succeeding another, are represented by the great image of gold, silver, brass, iron and clay; but at last a stone, cut out of the mountain without hands, smites the image upon his feet, which breaks the iron, clay, brass, silver and gold in pieces, that all become as the chaff of the summer threshing floors, and the wind carries them away, that no place is found for them; but the stone waxes great, becomes a great mountain, and *fills the whole earth:* signifying the kingdom which the Lord God of heaven should set up in the world, last of all, which should break in pieces and consume all other kingdoms. Surely this representation leads us to suppose, that this last kingdom shall be of much greater extent than any of the preceding.

The like representation is made in the viith chapter of Daniel; there the four monarchies are represented by four great beasts that arose successively, one conquering and subduing another: the fourth and last of these is said to be *dreadful* and *terrible*, and *strong exceedingly*, and *to have great iron teeth*, and *to devour and break in pieces, and stamp the residue with his feet;* yea, it is said, ver. 23, that the kingdom represented by this beast shall "*devour the whole earth:* but last of all, *one like the Son of man* appears, *coming to the Ancient of days, and being brought near before him, and receiving of him a dominion, and glory, and a kingdom,* THAL ALL PEOPLE, NATIONS and LANGUAGES *should serve him.*" This last circumstance, of the vast extent and universality of his dominion, is manifestly spoken of as one thing greatly distinguishing this holy kingdom from all the preceding monarchies. Although of one of the former it was said, that it should *devour the whole earth*, yet we are naturally led, both by the much greater emphasis and strength of the expressions, as well as by the whole connection and tenor of the prophecy, to understand the universality here expressed in a much more extensive and absolute sense. And the terms used in the interpretation of this vision are such, that scarcely any can be devised more strong, to signify an absolute universality of dominion over the inhabitants of the face of the earth; ver. 27. "And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the most high God." Agreeably to this, the gospel is represented as "preached unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and tongue, and kindred, and people." Rev. xiv. 6.

The universal prevalence of true religion in the latter days, is sometimes expressed by its reaching to the *utmost ends of the earth*, (Psal. ii. 8.) "To all the ends of the earth, and of the world," (Psal. xxii. 27.—lxvii. 7. xcviii. 3. Isai xlv. 22.) "All the ends of the earth, with those that are far off upon the sea," (Psal. lxv. 5.) "From the rising of the sun to the going down of the same," (Psal. cxiii. 3. Mal. 1. 11.) "The outgoing of the morning and of the evening," (Psal. lxv. 8.) It seems that all the most strong expressions that were in use among the Jews to signify the habitable world in its utmost extent, are used to signify the extent of the church of God in the latter days. And in many places a *variety* of these expressions is used, and there is an accumulation of them, expressed with great force.

It would be reasonable to say, these are only bold *figures*, used after the manner of the *eastern* nations to express the great extent of the christian church, at and after the days of Constantine. To say so would be in effect to say that it would have been impossible for God, if he had desired it, plainly to have foretold any thing that should absolutely have extended to all nations of the earth. I question whether it be possible to find out a more strong expression, to signify an absolute universality of the knowledge of the true religion through the habitable world, than that in Isai. xi. 9. "The earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, *as the waters cover the sea.*" Which is as much as to say, as there is no place in the vast ocean where there is not water, so there shall be no part of the world of mankind where there is not the knowledge of the Lord; as there is no part of the wide bed or cavity possessed by the sea, but what is covered with water, so there shall be no part of the habitable world that shall not be covered by the light of the gospel, and possessed by the true religion. *Waters* are often in prophecy put for nations and multitudes of people. So the waters of the main ocean seem sometimes to be put for the inhabitants of the earth in general; as in Ezekiel's vision of the waters of the sanctuary (Ezek. xlvii.) which flowed from the sanctuary, and ran east till they came to the ocean, and were at first a small stream, but continually increased till they became a great river; and when they came to the sea, the water even of the vast ocean was *healed* (ver. 8.) representing the conversion of the world to the true religion in the latter days.

It seems evident that the time will come, when there will not be one nation remaining in the world which shall not embrace the true religion, in that God has expressly revealed that no one such nation shall be left standing on the earth; Isai. lx. 12. "The nation and kingdom that will not serve Thee shall perish; yea, those nations shall be utterly wasted."—God

has declared that heathen idolatry and all the worship of false gods shall be wholly abolished, in the most universal manner, so that it shall be continued in no place under the heavens, or upon the face of the earth; Jer. x. 11. "The gods that have not made the heavens and the earth, even they shall perish from the earth, and from under these heavens." Ver. 15. "They are vanity, and the work of errors, in the time of their visitation they shall perish." This must be understood as what shall be brought to pass while *this earth* and *these heavens* remain, i. e. before the end of the world. Agreeable to this is Isai. liv. 1, 2. "Sing, O barren, thou that didst not bear;—for more are the children of the desolate than the children of the married wife, saith the Lord: enlarge the place of thy tent, and let them stretch forth the curtains of thy habitation; spare not; lengthen thy cords, strengthen thy stakes." Ver 5. "For thy maker is thy husband; the Lord of Hosts is his name; and thy redeemer the holy one of Israel; *the God of the whole earth shall he be called.*"

The prophecies of the *new testament* do no less evidently shew, that a time will come when the gospel shall universally prevail, and the kingdom of Christ be extended over the whole habitable earth, in the most proper sense. Christ says (John xii. 32.) "I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me." It is fit, that when the Son of God becomes man, he should have dominion over all mankind. It is fit, that since he became an inhabitant of the earth, and shed his blood on the earth, he should possess the whole earth. It is fit, seeing here he became a servant and was subject to men, and was arraigned before them, and judged, condemned, and executed by them, and suffered ignominy and death in a most public manner, before Jews and Gentiles—being *lifted up* to view on the cross upon an hill near that populous city *Jerusalem*, at a most public time, when there were many hundred thousand spectators from all parts—that he should be rewarded with an universal dominion over mankind; and it is here declared he shall be.

The apostle, in the xith of Romans, teaches us to look on that great outpouring of the spirit and ingathering of souls into Christ's kingdom, in those days, first of the Jews and then of the Gentiles, to be but as the *first-fruits* of the intended harvest, both with regard to Jews and Gentiles, as a sign that all should in due time be gathered in; ver. 16. "For if the first-fruit be holy, the lump is also holy: and if the root be holy, so are the branches." And in that context, the apostle speaks of the FULNESS of both Jews and Gentiles, as what shall hereafter be brought in, distinctly from the ingathering from among both, in those primitive ages of Christianity. In ver. 12. we read of the *fulness of the Jews*, and in the 25th, of the *fulness of the*

Gentiles. And in ver. 30—32, the apostle teaches us to look upon that infidelity and darkness, which first prevailed over all Gentile nations before Christ came, and *afterwards* over the Jews, as what was wisely permitted for the manifestation of the glory of God's mercy, in due time, on the whole world, constituted of Jews and Gentiles. *God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all.* These things plainly shew that the time is coming when the *whole world* of mankind shall be brought into the church of Christ; the *fulness* of both, *the whole lump*, all the nation of the Jews, and all the world of Gentiles.

In the last great conflict between the church of Christ and her enemies, before the commencement of the glorious time of the church's peace and rest, *the kings of the earth, and the* WHOLE WORLD, are represented as *gathered together*, Rev. xvi. 14. And then *the seventh angel pours out his vial into the air*, which limits the kingdom of Satan, as god of this world; and that kingdom is represented as utterly overthrown, ver. 17. &c. In another description of that great battle, (chap. xix.) Christ is represented as riding forth, having on his head *many crowns*, and on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, *King of kings and Lord of lords.* Which we may well suppose signifies, that he is now going to that conquest, whereby he shall set up a kingdom in which he shall be *King of kings*, in a far more extensive manner than either Babylonish, Persian, Grecian, or Roman monarchs were. And in ver. 17, and following, *an angel* appears *standing in the sun*, that overlooks the whole world, calling on "all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven, to come and eat the flesh of kings," &c. And in consequence of the great victory Christ gains at that time, "an angel comes down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit, and a great chain in his hand, and lays hold on the devil, and binds him, and casts him into the bottomless pit, and shuts him up, and sets a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more." Satan being dispossessed of that highest monarchy on earth, the *Roman empire*, and cast out in the time of Constantine, is represented, (chap. xii.) by his being *cast down from heaven to the earth:* but now there is something far beyond that; he is cast *out of the earth*, and is shut up in *hell*, and confined to that alone so that he has no place left him in this world of mankind, high or low.

Now will any be so unreasonable as to say, that all these things do not signify more than that one *third* part of the world should be brought into the church of Christ: beyond which it cannot be pretended that the christian religion has ever yet reached, in its greatest extent? Those countries which belonged to the Roman empire, that were brought to the profession of christianity after the reign of Constantine,

are but a small part of what the habitable world now is. As to extent of ground they all together bear, I suppose, no greater proportion to it than the land of Canaan did to the Roman empire. And our Redeemer in his kingdom of grace has hitherto possessed but a little part of the world, in its most flourishing state, since arts are arisen to their greatest height; and a very great part of the world is but lately discovered, and much remains undiscovered to this day. These things make it very evident, that the *main fulfilment* of those prophecies that speak of the glorious advancement of Christ's kingdom on *earth*, is still to come.

And as there has been nothing as yet, with regard to the flourishing of religion and the advancement of Christ's kingdom, of such *extent* as to answer the prophecies, so neither has there been any thing of that *duration* that is foretold. The prophecies speak of Jerusalem being made *the joy of the whole earth*, and also the *joy of many generations* (Psal. xlviii. 2. Isai. lx. 15.) That "God's people should long enjoy the work of their hands," (Isa. lxv. 22.) That they should "reign with Christ a thousand years," (Rev. xx.) by which we must at least understand a very long time. But it would be endless to mention all the places which signify that the time of the church's great peace and prosperity should be of long continuance. Almost all the prophecies that speak of her latter-day glory, imply it; and it is implied in very many of them, that when once this day of the church's advancement and peace is begun, it shall never end till the world ends; or at least, that there shall be no more a return of her troubles and adversity for any considerable continuance. Then "the days of her mourning shall be ended;" her tribulations "be as the waters of Noah unto God, that as he has sworn that the waters of Noah should no more pass over the earth, so he will swear that he will no more be wroth with his people, or rebuke them." It is implied that "God's people should no more walk after the imagination of their evil hearts; that God would hide himself no more from the house of Israel; because he has poured out his spirit upon them; that their sun should no more go down, nor the moon withdraw itself; that the light should not be clear and dark," (i. e. there should be no more an interchange of light and darkness, as used to be) but that it should be all *one* continued *day; not day and night* (for so the words are in the original in Zech. xiv. 7.) alternately, "but it shall come to pass, that at evening time (i. e. at the time that night and darkness used to be) it shall be light; and that the nations should beat their swords into plow-shares, and their spears into pruning-hooks, and that nation should not lift up sword against nation, nor learn war any more; but that there should be abundance of peace so long as the moon endureth."

But the church of Christ has never yet enjoyed a state of peace and prosperity for any *long* time; on the contrary, the time for her rest, and of the flourishing state of religion, have ever been very *short*. Hitherto the church may say (as in Isai. lxiii. 17,18.) "Return for thy servants' sake the tribes of thine inheritance; the people of thy holiness have possessed it but a little while." The quietness that the church of God enjoyed after the beginning of Constantine's reign, was very short. The peace the empire enjoyed in freedom from war, was not more than twenty years; no longer nor greater than it had enjoyed under some of the heathen emperors. After this the empire was rent in pieces by intestine wars, and wasted almost every where by the invasions and incursions of barbarous nations; and the christian world soon after was all in contention and confusion, by heresies and divisions in matters of religion. And the church of Christ has never as yet been, for any long time, free from persecution; especially when truth has prevailed and true religion flourished. It is manifest, that hitherto the people of God have been kept under, and *Zion* has been in a low afflicted state, and her enemies have had the chief sway.

Another thing which makes it exceedingly manifest that the day of the church's greatest advancement on earth, which is foretold in scripture, has never yet come, is, that it is so plainly and expressly revealed, this day shall succeed the *last* of the four monarchies, even the Roman, in its *last* state, wherein it is divided into *ten kingdoms*, and after the destruction of Antichrist, signified by the *little horn*, whose reign is contemporary with the reign of the ten kings. These things are very plain in the iid and viith chapters of Daniel, and also in the revelation of St. John. And it is also plain by the ixth chapter of Romans, that it sh ll be after the national conversion of the Jews, *which shall be as life from the dead to the Gentiles* and the *fulness of both Jews and Gentiles shall be come in*, all the nation of the Jews, and all other nations, shall *obtain mercy*, and there shall be that general ingathering of the *harvest* of the whole earth, of which all that had been converted before, either of Jews or Gentiles, were but the *first fruits*.

Thus it is meet that the last kingdom which shall take place on earth, should be the kingdom of God's own *son* and *heir*, whose right it is to rule and reign; and that whatever revolutions and confusions there may be in the world, for a long time, the cause of truth, the righteous cause, shall finally prevail, and God's holy people should at last inherit the earth, and reign on earth; and that the world should continue in tumults and great revolutions, following one another from age to age, the world being as it were in *travail*, till truth and holiness are brought forth. It is meet that all things should be *shaken*,

till that comes which is true and right, and agreeable to the mind of God, which *cannot be shaken;* and that the wisdom of the ruler of the world should be manifested in bringing all things ultimately to so good an issue. The world is made for the Son of God; his kingdom is the *end* of all changes that come to pass in the state of the world. All are only to prepare the way for this; it is fit, therefore, that the last kingdom on earth should be his. It is wisely and mercifully ordered of God that it should be so, on this account, as well as many others, viz. That the church of God, under all preceding changes, should have this consideration to encourage her and maintain her hope, and animate her faith and prayers, from generation to generation, that God has promised her cause should finally be maintained and prevail in the world.

SECT. II.

The latter-day glory unspeakably great.

The future promised advancement of the kingdom of Christ is an event unspeakably happy and glorious. The scriptures speak of it as a time wherein God and his Son Jesus Christ will be most eminently glorified on earth; a time wherein God, who till then had *dwelt between the cherubims*—and concealed himself in the holy of holies, in the secret of his tabernacle, behind the *veil*, in the thick darkness—should openly "shine forth, and all flesh should see his glory," and God's people in general have as great a privilege as the High Priest alone had once a year, or as Moses had in the Mount. A time this, wherein the "temple of God in heaven should be opened, and there should be seen the ark of his testament;" (Rev. xi. 19.) a time wherein both God will be greatly glorified, and his saints made unspeakably happy in the view of his glory; a time wherein God's people should not only *once* see the light of God's glory, as Moses, or see it *once a year* with the High Priest, but should *dwell and walk continually* in it, and it should be their constant daily light, instead of the light of the sun (Isai. ii. 5. Psal. lxxxix. 15. Isai. lx. 19.) which light should be so much more glorious than the light of the sun or moon, that "the moon shall be confounded, and the sun ashamed, when the Lord of hosts should reign in mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, before his antients gloriously;" Isai. xxiv. 23.

It is represented as a time of vast increase of *knowledge* and *understanding*, especially in divine things; a time wherein God would "destroy the face of the covering cast over all people and the veil spread over all nations;" (Isai. xxv. 7.) wherein "the light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun, and the

light of the sun seven-fold," (Isai. xxx. 26.) "And the eyes of them that see shall not be dim, and the heart of the rash shall understand knowledge," (Isai. xxxii. 3, 4.) "And they shall no more teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, know the Lord, because they shall all know him from the least to the greatest," (Jer. xxxi. 24.) It is declared to be a time of general *holiness*, (Isai. lx. 30.) "Thy people shall be all righteous." A time of prevailing *eminent* holiness, when little *children* shall in spiritual attainments, be as though they were *a hundred years old*, (Isai. lxv. 20.) wherein "he that is feeble among God's people shall be as David," (Zech. xii. 8.) A time wherein holiness should be as it were *inscribed on every thing*, on all men's common business and employments, and the common utensils of life, all shall be dedicated to God, and improved to holy purposes. (Isai. xxiii. 18.) "Her merchandise and hire shall be holiness to the Lord." (Zech. xiv. 20, 21.) "In that day shall there be upon the bells of the horses, *holiness unto the Lord;* and the pots in the Lord's house shall be like the bowls before the altar; yea, every pot in Jerusalem and in Judah shall be holiness unto the Lord of hosts."

A time shall come wherein religion and true christianity shall in every respect be *uppermost* in the world; wherein God will cause his church to "arise and shake herself from the dust, and put on her beautiful garments, and sit down on a throne; and the poor shall be raised from the dust, and the beggar from the dunghill, and shall be set among princes, and made to inherit the throne of God's glory;"—a time wherein vital piety shall take possession of thrones and palaces, and those that are in most exalted stations shall be eminent in holiness, (Isai. xlix. 23.) "And kings shall be thy nursing fathers, and their queens thy nursing mothers." (Chap. lx. 16.) "Thou shalt suck the breasts of kings." (Isai. xlv. 12.) "The daughter of Tyre shall be there with a gift, the rich among the people shall entreat thy favour." A time of wonderful *union*, and the most universal peace, love, and sweet harmony; wherein the nations shall "beat their swords into plow-shares," &c. and God will "cause wars to cease to the ends of the earth, and break the bow, and cut the spear in sunder, and burn the chariot in the fire; and the mountains shall bring forth peace to God's people, and the little hills by righteousness;" wherein "the wolf shall dwell with the lamb," &c. and wherein "God's people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings, and quiet resting places;" (Isai. xxxii. 17, 18. and xxxiii. 20, 21.)

A time shall come wherein all *heresies*, and false doctrines shall be exploded, and the church of God shall not be rent with a variety of jarring opinions, (Zech. xiv. 9.) "The Lord shall be king over all the earth: in that day there shall be one Lord, and his name one." All superstitious ways of worship shall

be abolished, and all agree in worshipping God in his own appointed way, and agreeably to the purity of his institutions; (Jer. xxxii. 39.) "I will give them one heart and one way, that they may fear me for ever, for the good of them and their children after them." A time wherein the whole earth shall be united as one holy city, one heavenly family, men of all nations shall as it were dwell together, and sweetly correspond one with another, as brethren and children of the same father; as the prophecies often speak of God's people at that time as the children of God, and brethren one to another, all *appointing over them one head*, gathered to one *house of God*, *to worship the king*, *the Lord of hosts.*

A time approaches wherein this whole great society shall appear in glorious beauty, in genuine amiable christianity and excellent order, as "a city compact together, the perfection of beauty, an eternal excellency," shining with a reflection of the glory of Jehovah risen upon it, which shall be attractive and ravishing to all kings and nations, and it shall appear *as a bride adorned for her husband.*—A time of great temporal prosperity; of great health; (Isai. xxxiii. 24.) "The inhabitant shall not say I am sick" of long life; (Isai. lv. 22.) "As the days of a tree, are the days of my people." A time wherein the earth shall be abundantly fruitful; (Psal. lxvii. Isai. vi. 23, 24. Amos. ix. 16. and many other places.) A time wherein the world shall be delivered from that multitude of sore calamities which before had prevailed, Ezek. xlvii. 20.) and there shall be an universal blessing of God upon mankind, in soul and body, and in all their concerns, and all manner of tokens of God's presence and favour, and "God shall rejoice over them, as the bridegroom rejoiceth over his bride, and the mountains shall as it were drop down new wine, and the hills shall flow with milk;" (Joel iii. 18.)

A time of great and universal joy, we are taught to expect, will take place through all the earth, when "from the uttermost ends of the earth shall be heard songs, even glory to the righteous," and God's people "shall with joy draw water out of the wells of salvation." God shall "prepare in his holy mountain, a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things, full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined," which feast is represented, Rev. xix. as *the marriage supper of the Lamb.* Yea, the scriptures represent it not only as a time of universal joy on earth, but extraordinary joy in heaven, among the angels and saints, the holy apostles and prophets there; (Rev. xviii. 20. and xix. 1—9.) Yea, the scriptures represent it as a time of extraordinary rejoicing with Christ himself, the glorious head, in whom all things in heaven and earth shall then be gathered together in one; (Zech. iii. 17.) "The Lord thy God in the midst of thee is mighty; he will save: he will

rejoice over thee with joy; he will rest in his love: he will joy over thee with singing." And the very fields, trees, and mountains shall then as it were rejoice, and break forth into singing; (Isai. lv. 12.) "Ye shall go out with joy, and be led forth with peace; the mountains and the hills shall break forth before you into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands." (Isai. xliv. 23.) "Sing, O heavens, for the Lord hath done it; shout, ye lower parts of the earth; break forth into singing, ye mountains; O forest, and every tree therein: for the Lord hath redeemed Jacob, and glorified himself in Israel."

Such being the state of things in this future promised glorious day of the church's prosperity, surely it is worth *praying* for. Nor is there any one thing whatsoever, if we viewed things aright, for which a regard to the glory of God, a concern for the kingdom and honour of our Redeemer, a love to his people, pity to perishing sinners——love to our fellow-creatures in general, compassion to mankind under their various and sore calamities and miseries, a desire of their temporal and spiritual prosperity, love to our country, our neighbours and friends, yea, and to our own souls—would dispose us to be so much in prayer, as for the dawning of this happy day, and the accomplishment of this glorious event.

SECT. III.

How much Christ prayed and laboured and suffered, in order to the Glory and Happiness of that Day.

The sum of the blessings Christ sought, by what he did and suffered in the work of redemption, was the *Holy Spirit.* Thus is the affair of our redemption constituted; *the Father* provides and gives the Redeemer, and the price of redemption is offered to him, and he grants the benefit purchased; *the Son* is the Redeemer who gives the price, and also is the price offered; and the *Holy Spirit* is the grand blessing obtained by the price offered and bestowed on the redeemed. The Holy Spirit, in his indwelling presence, his influences and fruits, is the sum of all grace, holiness, comfort and joy; or in one word, of all the spiritual good Christ *purchased* for men in this world: and is also the sum of all perfection, glory and eternal joy, that he purchased for them in another world. The Holy Spirit is the subject matter of the promises, both of the eternal covenant of redemption, and also of the covenant of grace. This is the grand subject of the *promises* of the Old Testament, so often recorded in the prophecies of Messiah's kingdom; and the chief subject of the promises of the New Testament; and

particularly of the covenant of grace delivered by Jesus Christ to his disciples, as his last will and testament, in the xiv. xv. and xvi. chapters of John; the grand legacy that he bequeathed to them, in his last and dying discourse with them. Therefore the Holy Spirit is so often called the *spirit of promise* and emphatically, *the promise*, *the promise of the Father*, &c.*

This being the great blessing Christ purchased by his labours and sufferings on earth, it was that which he *received of the Father* when he ascended into heaven, and entered into the holy of holies with his own blood, that he might communicate it to those whom he had redeemed. John xvi. 7. "It is expedient for you, that I go away; for if I go not away, the comforter will not come; but if I depart, I will send him unto you." Acts ii. 33. "Being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this which ye now see and hear."—This is the sum of those *gifts*, which Christ *received for men*, *even for the rebellious*, at his ascension; and of the *benefits* Christ obtains for men by his *intercession;* John xiv. 16, 17. "I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; even the spirit of truth." Herein consists Christ's communicative *fulness*, even in his being full of the spirit; and so full of grace and truth, that we might of *this fulness receive, and grace for grace.* He is *anointed with the Holy Ghost*, and this is *the ointment that goes down from the head* to the members. "God gives the spirit not by measure unto him, that every member might receive according to the measure of the gift of Christ." This therefore was the great blessing he prayed for in that wonderful *prayer* which he uttered for his disciples and all his future church, the evening before he died, John xvii. The blessing he prayed for to the Father, in behalf of his disciples, was the same he had insisted on in his preceding discourse with them; and this, doubtless, was the blessing he prayed for, when as our High Priest he *offered up strong crying and tears*, with his blood, Heb. v. 6, 7. As for this he shed his blood, for this he also shed tears, and poured out prayers.

But of all the time we have been speaking of, this is the *chief season* for the bestowment of this blessing; the *main season* of success to all that Christ did and suffered in the work of our redemption. Before this, the Spirit of God is given but very sparingly, and but few are saved; but *then* it will be far otherwise; wickedness shall be rare then, as virtue and piety had been before: and undoubtedly by far the greatest number of them that ever receive the benefits of Christ's redemp-

* Luke xxiv. 49. Acts i. 4. and ii. 33. 39. Gal. iii. 14. Eph. i, 13. and iii. 6.

tion, from the beginning of the world to the end of it, will receive it in that time.*

This time is represented in scripture, as the proper appointed season of Christ's salvation; eminently the elect season, *the accepted time*, and *day of salvation*.† "The year of Christ's redeemed," Isai. lxiii. 4.—This period is spoken of as the proper time of the Redeemer's *dominion*, and the reign of his redeeming love, in the iid and viith chapters of Daniel, and many other places; the proper time of his *harvest*, or ingathering of his fruits from this fallen world; the appointed day of his triumph over Satan, the great destroyer; and the appointed day of his *marriage* with his elect spouse, (Rev. xix. 7.) The time given to the *Sun of Righteousness* to rule, as the day is the time God has appointed for the natural sun to bear rule. Therefore the bringing on of this time is called "Christ's coming in his kingdom;" wherein "he will rend the heavens and come down, and the Sun of Righteousness shall arise," (Mal. iv. 2. and Isai. lx. 1.)

The comparatively little saving good there is in the world, as the fruit of Christ's redemption, before that time, is as it were granted by way of anticipation, as we anticipate something of the sun's light by reflection before the proper time of the sun's rule; and as the first-fruits are gathered before the harvest. Then more especially will be the fulfilment of

* The number of the inhabitants of the earth will doubtless then be vastly multiplied, and the number of redeemed ones much more —If we should suppose that glorious day to last no more than literally a *thousand y ars*, and that at the beginning of that thousand years the world of mankind should be but just as numerous as it is now, and that the number should be *doubled*, during that time of great health and peace and the universal blessing of heaven, *once* only in an *hundred* years, the number at the end of the thousand years would be more than a *thousand* times greater than it is now; and if it should be doubled once in *fifty* years (which probably the number of the inhabitants of New-England has ordinarily been in about *half* that time) then at the end of the thousand years there would be more than a *million* inhabitants on the face of the earth, where there is *one* now. And there is reason to think that through the greater part of this period, at least, the number of *saints* will, in their increase, bear a proportion to the increase of the number of inhabitants. And it must be considered, that if the number of mankind at the beginning of this period be no more than equal to the present number, yet we may doubtless conclude, that the number of true saints will be immensely greater; when instead of the *few* true and thorough christians now in some few countries, every *nation* on the face of the whole earth shall be converted to christianity, and every country shall be full of true christians; so that the successive multiplication of true saints through the *thousand years*, will begin with that vast advantage, beyond the multiplication of mankind; where the latter is begun from *units*, the other doubtless will begin with *hundreds*, if not *thousands*. How much greater then will be the number of true converts, that will be brought to a participation of the benefits of Christ's redemption, during that period, than in all other times put together? I think, the foregoing things considered, we shall be very moderate in our conjectures, if we say it is probable that there will be an *hundred thousand* times more that will actually be redeemed to God by Christ's blood, during that period of the church's prosperity, than ever had been before, from the beginning of the world to that time.

† Isai. xlix. 8. and so on to ver. 23. and chap. lxi. 2. taken with the context, in that and the preceding and following chapters.

those great promises, made by God the Father to the Son, for his pouring out his soul unto death; (Isai. liii. 10—12.) then shall he see his seed; and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand;" then "shall he see of the travail of his soul, and be satisfied, and shall justify many by his knowledge;" then will God divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong;" then shall Christ in an eminent manner obtain his chosen spouse, that "he loved and died for, that he might sanctify and cleanse her, with the washing of water, by the word, and present her to himself, a glorious church." He will obtain "the joy that was set before him, for which he endured the cross, and despised the shame," chiefly in the events and consequences of that day: that day, as was observed before, which is often represented as eminently the time of the "rejoicing of the bridegroom." The foreknowledge and consideration of it was what supported him, and that in which his soul exulted, at a time when it had been troubled at the view of his approaching sufferings; as may be seen in John xii. 23, 24, 27, 31, 32.

Now therefore, if this is what Jesus Christ, our great Redeemer and the head of the church, did so much desire, and set his heart upon from all eternity, and for which he did and suffered so much, offering up *strong crying and tears*, and *his precious blood*, to obtain it; surely his disciples and members should also earnestly seek it, and be much in prayer for it.

SECT. IV.

The whole Creation travails in Pain.

The whole creation is, as it were, earnestly waiting for that day, and constantly *groaning and travailing in pain* to bring forth the felicity and glory of it. For that day is above all other times, excepting the day of judgment, the day of *the manifestation of the sons of God*, and of their *glorious liberty*: And therefore, that elegant representation the apostle makes of the earnest expectation and travail of the creation in Rom. viii. 19—22. is applicable to the glorious event of this day; "the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God. For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope. Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now." The visible world has now for many ages been subject to sin, and made, as it were, a servant to it, through the abuse that

man, who has the dominion over the creatures, puts the creatures to. Thus the sun is a sort of servant to all manner of wickedness, as its light and other beneficial influences are abused by men, and made subservient to their lusts and sinful purposes. So of the rain, the fruits of the earth, the brute animals, and all other parts of the visible creation; they all serve men's corruption, and obey their sinful will. And God doth in a sort subject them to it; for he continues his influence and power to make them obedient, according to the same law of nature whereby they yield to men's command when used to good purposes.

It is by the immediate influence of God upon things according to those constant methods which we call the laws of nature, that they are ever obedient to man's will, or that we can use them at all. This influence God continues in order to make them obedient to man's will, though wicked. This is a sure sign that the present state of things is not lasting: it is confusion; and God would not suffer it to be, but that he designs in a little time to put an end to it. Seeing it is to be but a little while, God chooses rather to subject the creature to man's wickedness, than to disturb and interrupt the course of nature according to its stated laws: but it is, as it were, a force upon the creature; for the creature is abused in it, perverted to far meaner purposes than those for which the author of its nature made and adapted it. The creature therefore is unwillingly subject, and but for a short time; and, as it were, hopes for an alteration. It is a bondage which the creature is subject to, from which it was partly delivered when Christ came, and when the gospel was promulgated in the world; and will be more fully delivered at the commencement of the glorious day we are speaking of, and perfectly at the day of judgment. This agrees with the context; for the apostle was speaking of the present suffering state of the church. The reason why the church in this world is in a suffering state, is, that the world is subject to the sin and corruption of mankind. By vanity and corruption in scripture, is very commonly meant sin, or wickedness; as might be shewn in very many places, would my intended brevity allow.

Though the creature is thus subject to vanity, yet does not it rest in this subjection, but is constantly acting and exerting itself, in order to that glorious liberty that God has appointed at the time we are speaking of, and, as it were, reaching forth towards it. All the changes brought to pass in the world from age to age, are ordered by infinite wisdom, in one respect or other to prepare the way for that glorious issue of things, when truth and righteousness shall finally prevail, and he whose right it is shall take the kingdom. All the creatures, in all their operations and motions, continually tend to this. As in

a clock, all the motions of the whole system of wheels and movements, tend to the striking of the hammer at the appointed time. All the revolutions and restless motions of the sun and other heavenly bodies, from day to day, from year to year and from age to age, are continually tending thither: as all the many turnings of the wheels of a chariot in a journey tend to the appointed journey's end. The mighty struggles and conflicts of nations, those vast successive changes which are brought to pass in the kingdoms and empires of the world, from one age to another, are as it were travail-pangs of the creation, in order to bring forth this glorious event. And the scriptures represent the last struggles and changes that shall immediately precede this event, as being the greatest of all; as the last pangs of a woman in travail are the most violent.

The creature thus earnestly expecting this glorious manifestation and liberty of the children of God, and travailing in pain in order to it, the scriptures, by a like figure, very often show that when this shall be accomplished, the whole inanimate creation shall greatly rejoice: "That the heavens shall sing, the earth be glad, the mountains break forth into singing, the hills be joyful together, the trees clap their hands, the lower parts of the earth shout, the sea roar, and the fulness thereof, and the floods clap their hands."*

All the intelligent elect creation, all God's holy creatures in heaven and earth, are truly and properly waiting for, and earnestly expecting that event. It is abundantly represented in scripture as the spirit and character of all true saints, that they set their hearts upon love, long, wait and pray for the promised glory of that day; they are spoken of as those that "prefer Jerusalem to their chief joy," (Psal. cxxxvii. 6.) "That take pleasure in the stones of Zion, and favour the dust thereof," (Psal. cii. 13, 14.) "That wait for the consolation of Israel," (Luke ii. 25. and ver. 38.) It is the language of the church of God, and the breathing of every true saint, (Psal. xiv. 7.) "O that the salvation of Israel were come out of Zion! when the Lord bringeth back the captivity of his people, Jacob shall rejoice, and Israel shall be glad." And Cant. ii. 17. "Until the day break, and the shadows flee away, turn, my beloved, and be thou like a roe, or a young hart upon the mountains of Bether." And chap. viii. 14. "Make haste, my beloved, and be thou like to a roe, or to a young hart upon the mountains of spices." Agreeable to this was the spirit of old Jacob, which he expressed when he was dying, exercising faith in the great promise made to him, and Isaac, and Abraham, that "in their seed all the families of the earth should be blessed," Gen. xlix.

* See Isai. xliv. 23.—xlix. 13. Psal. lxix. 34, 35.—xcvi. 11, 12. and xcviii. 7, 8.

18, "I have waited for thy salvation, O Lord." The same is represented as the spirit of his true children, or the family of Jacob, Isai. viii. 17. "I will wait upon the Lord, that hideth himself from the house of Jacob, and I will look for him.—They that love Christ's appearing," is a name that the apostle gives to true christians, 2 Tim. iv. 8.

The glorious inhabitants of the heavenly world—the saints and angels there who rejoice when one sinner repents—are earnestly waiting, in an assured and joyful dependence on God's promises of that conversion of the world and marriage of the Lamb, which shall take place when that glorious day comes: and therefore they are represented as all with one accord rejoicing, and praising God with such mighty exultation and triumph, when it is accomplished, Rev. xix.

SECT. V.

Precepts, Encouragements, and Examples.

The word of God is full of *precepts*, *encouragements*, and *examples*, tending to excite and induce the people of God to be much in *prayer* for this mercy. The spirit of God is the *chief* of blessings, for it is the *sum* of all spiritual blessings; which we need infinitely more than others, and wherein our true and eternal happiness consists. That which is the sum of the blessings Christ purchased, is the sum of the blessings christians have to pray for; but that, as was observed before, is the Holy Spirit. Therefore, when the disciples came to Christ desiring him to teach them to pray, (Luke xi.) and he accordingly gave them particular directions for the performance of this duty; he adds ver. 13. "If ye then being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?" From which words of Christ we may also observe, that there is no blessing we have so great encouragement to pray for, as the Spirit of God. The words imply that our heavenly Father is especially ready to bestow his Holy Spirit on them that ask him. The more excellent the nature of any benefit is which we stand in need of, the more ready God is to bestow it, in answer to prayer. The infinite goodness of God's nature is the more gratified, the grand design of our redemption is the better answered, Jesus Christ the Redeemer has the greater success in his undertaking and labours; and those desires which are expressed in prayer for the most excellent blessings, are the most excellent desires, and consequently such as God most approves of, and is most ready to gratify.

The scriptures do not only direct and encourage us in general to pray for the Holy Spirit above all things else; but it is the expressly revealed will of God, that his church should be *very much* in prayer for that glorious outpouring of the Spirit, which is to be in the latter days, and for what shall be accomplished by it. God, speaking of that blessed event, Ezek. xxxvi. under the figure of "cleansing the house of Israel from all their iniquities, planting and building their waste and ruined places, and making them to become like the garden of Eden, and filling them with men like a flock, like the holy flock, the flock of Jerusalem in her solemn feasts,"* he says, ver. 37. "Thus saith the Lord, I will yet for this be enquired of by the house of Israel, to do it for them." Which doubtless, implies it is the will of God, that extraordinary prayerfulness in his people for this mercy should precede the bestowment of it.

I know of no place in the bible, where so strange an expression is made use of to signify *importunity* in prayer, as is used in Isai. lxii. 6, 7, where the people of God are called upon to be importunate for this mercy: "Ye that make mention of the Lord, keep not silence, and give him no rest, till he establish, and till he make Jerusalem a praise in the earth," How strong is the phrase! And how loud is this call to the church of God, to be fervent and incessant in their cries to him for this great mercy! How wonderful the words used, concerning the manner in which such worms of the dust should address the high and lofty one that inhabits eternity! And what encouragement is here, to approach the mercy-seat with the greatest freedom, humble boldness, earnestness, constancy, and full assurance of faith, to seek of God this greatest favour that can be sought in christian prayer!

It is a just observation of a certain eminent minister of the church of Scotland, in a discourse lately published on *social prayer*, in which, speaking of pleading for the success of the gospel, as required by the *Lord's prayer*, he says, "That notwithstanding of its being so compendious, yet the one half of it, that is, three petitions in six, and these the first prescribed, do all relate to this great case:—so that to put any one of these petitions apart, or all of them together, is upon the matter to pray that the dispensation of the gospel may be blessed with divine power." That glorious day is the proper and appointed time, above all others, for bringing to pass the things requested in each of these petitions. The prophecies every where represent that as the time, which God has espe-

* In this passage the prophet doubtless, has respect to the same glorious restoration and advancement of his church that is spoken of in the next chapter, and in all the following chapters to the end of the book.

cially appointed for glorifying his own great name in this world, causing *his glory to be revealed, that all flesh may see it together*, causing it *openly to be manifested in the sight of the heathen*, filling the whole world with the light of his glory to such a degree, that *the moon shall be confounded and the sun ashamed* before that brighter glory; the appointed time for glorifying and magnifying the name of Jesus Christ, causing "every knee to bow, and every tongue to confess to him." This is the proper time "of God's kingdom coming," or of "Christ coming in his kingdom:" that is, the very time foretold in the 2d of Daniel, when the "Lord God of heaven shall set up a kingdom," in the latter times of the last monarchy, when it is divided into ten kingdoms.

And that is the very time foretold in the viith of Daniel, when there should be "given to one like the Son of man, dominion, glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations and languages should serve them; and the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom, under the whole heaven shall be given to the people of the saints of the most high God," after the destruction of the *little horn*, that should continue *for a time, times, and the dividing of time.* And that is the time wherein "God's will shall be done on earth, as it is done in heaven;" when *heaven* shall, as it were, be *bowed*, and *come down* to the earth, as "God's people shall be all righteous, and holiness to the Lord shall be written on the bells of the horses," &c. So that the three first petitions of the Lord's prayer are, in effect, no other than requests for bringing on this glorious day.—And as the Lord's prayer begins with asking for this in the three first petitions, so it concludes with it in these words, "For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen." Which words imply a request, that God would take to himself his great power, and reign, and manifest his power and glory in the world. Thus Christ teaches us, that it becomes his disciples to seek this above all other things, and make it the first and the last in their prayers, and that every petition should be put up in subordination to the advancement of God's kingdom and glory in the world.

Besides what has been observed of the Lord's prayer, if we look through the whole bible, and observe all the *examples* of prayer that we find there recorded, we shall not find so many prayers for any other mercy, as for the deliverance, restoration and prosperity of the *church*, and the advancement of *God's glory* and *kingdom of grace* in the world. If we well consider the prayers recorded in the books of Psalms, I believe we shall see reason to think, that a very great, if not the greater part of them, are prayers uttered, either in the name of Christ, or in the name of the *church*, for such a mercy: and undoubtedly

the greatest part of the book of Psalms, is made up of prayers for this mercy, prophecies of it, and prophetical praises for it.*

In order to Christ being mystically born, in the advancement of true religion and the great increase of true converts, who are spoken of as having *Christ formed in them*, the scriptures represent it as requisite, that the *church* should first be *in travail, crying in pain to be delivered;* Rev. xii. 1, 2, 5. And we have good reason to understand by it her exercising strong desires, wrestling and agonizing with God in *prayer*, for this event; because we find such figures of speech used in this sense elsewhere: so Gal. iv. 19. "My little children, of whom I travail in birth again, until Christ be formed in you."—Isai. xxvi. 16, 17. "Lord, in trouble have they visited thee; they poured out a prayer when thy chastening was upon them. Like as a woman with child, that draweth near the time of her delivery is in pain, and crieth out in her pangs, so have we been in thy sight, O Lord." And certainly it is fit, that the *church* of God should be in travail for that, for which the whole *creation* travails in pain.

The scripture does not only abundantly manifest it to be the duty of God's people to be much in prayer for this great mercy, but it also abounds with manifold considerations to *encourage* them in it, and animate them with hopes of *success*. There is perhaps no one thing that the bible so much promises, in order to encourage the faith, hope, and prayers of the saints, as this; which affords to God's people the clearest evidences that it is their duty to be much in prayer for this mercy. For, undoubtedly, that which God abundantly makes the subject of his *promises*, God's people should abundantly make the subject of their *prayers*. It also affords them the strongest assurances that their prayers shall be *succesful*. With what confidence may we go before God, and pray for that of which we have so many exceeding precious and glorious promises to plead! The very *first* promise of God to fallen man, (Gen. iii. 15.) "It shall bruise thy head," is to have its chief fulfilment at *that day*. And the whole bible *concludes* with a promise of the glory of *that day*, and a prayer for its fulfilment. Rev. xxii. 20. "He that testifieth these things, saith, Surely I come quickly: Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus."

The scripture gives us great reason to think, that when once there comes to appear much of a *spirit of prayer* in the church of God for this mercy, then it will soon be accomplished.

* The prophets, in their prophecies of the restoration and advancement of the church, very often speak of it as what shall be done in *answer* to the prayers of God's people. Isai. xxv. 9—xxvi. 9, 12, 13 16, 17, to the end. Chap. xxxiii. 2. Psal. cii. 13—22. Jer. iii. 21. Isai. lxv. 24—xli. 17 Hos. v. 15. with vi. 1, 2, 3, and xiv. 2, to the end. Zech. x. 6.—xii. 10, and xiii. 9. Isai. lv. 6. with ver. 12, 13. Jer. xxxiii. 3. The prophecies of future glorious times of the church are often introduced with a *prayer* of the church for her deliverance and advancement, prophetically uttered; as in Isai. li. 9, &c. Chap. lxiii. 11, to the end, and lxiv. throughout.

It is evidently with reference to this mercy, that God makes the promise in Isai. xli. 17—19. "When the poor and needy seek water and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst, I, the Lord, will hear them; I, the God of Israel, will not forsake them; I will open the rivers in high places, and fountains in the midst of the vallies; I will make the wilderness a pool of water, and the dry land springs of water; I will plant in the wilderness the cedar, the shittah-tree, and the myrtle, and the oil-tree; I will set in the desert the fir-tree, the pine, and the box-tree together." Spiritual *waters* and *rivers* are explained by the apostle John, to be the *Holy Spirit*, (John vii. 37—39.) It is now a time of scarcity of these spiritual waters; there are, as it were, *none*. If God's people, in this time of great drought, were but made duly sensible of this calamity, and their own emptiness and necessity, and brought earnestly to *thirst* and *cry* for needed supplies, God would doubtless soon fulfil this blessed promise. We have another promise much like this, in Psal. cii. 16, 17. "When the Lord shall build up Zion, he shall appear in his glory; he will regard the prayer of the destitute, and not despise their prayer." And remarkable are the words that follow in the next verse, "This shall be written for the generation to come; and the people which shall be created, shall praise the Lord." Which seems to signify, that this promise shall be left on record to encourage some *future generation* of God's people to pray and cry earnestly for this mercy, to whom he would *fulfil* the promise, and thereby give them, and great multitudes of others who should be converted through their prayers, occasion to *praise* his name.

Who knows but that the generation here spoken of may be this *present* generation? *One* thing mentioned in the character of that future generation, is certainly true concerning the present, viz. That it is *destitute*. The church of God is in very low, sorrowful and needy circumstances; and if the *next* thing there supposed were also verified in us, viz. That we were made *sensible* of our great calamity, and brought to *cry earnestly* to God for help, I am persuaded the *third* would be also verified, viz. That our *prayers* would be turned into joyful *praise*, for God's gracious answers of them. It is spoken of as a sign and evidence, that *the time to favour* Zion *is come*, when God's *servants* are brought by their prayerfulness for her restoration, in an eminent manner, to show that *they favour her stones and dust;* (Ver. 13, 14.) "Thou shalt arise, and have mercy upon Zion; for the time to favour her, yea, the set time is come; for thy servants take pleasure in her stones, and favour the dust thereof."

God has respect to the prayers of his saints in all his government of the world; as we may observe by the representation made Rev. viii. at the beginning. There we read of seven

angels standing before the throne of God, and receiving of him seven trumpets, at the sounding of which great and mighty changes were to be brought to pass in the world, through many successive ages. But when these angels had received their trumpets, they must stand still, and all must be in silence, not one of them must be allowed to sound till the prayers of the saints are attended to. The angel of the covenant, as a glorious high priest, comes and stands at the altar, with much incense, to offer with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar, before the throne; and the smoke of the incense, with the prayers of the saints, ascends up with acceptance before God, out of the angel's hand: and *then* the angels prepare themselves to sound. And God, in the events of every trumpet, remembers those prayers: as appears at last, by the great and glorious things he accomplishes for his church, in the issue of all, in answer to these prayers, in the event of the last trumpet, which brings the glory of the latter days, when these prayers shall be turned into joyful praises. Rev. xi. 15—17. "And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, the kingdoms of the world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever. And the four-and-twenty elders, which sat before God on their seats, fell upon their faces, and worshipped God, saying, we give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art and wast and art to come, because thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and hast reigned." Since it is the pleasure of God so to honour his people, as to carry on all the designs of his kingdom in this way, viz.—By the prayers of his saints; this gives us great reason to think, that whenever the time comes that God gives an extraordinary spirit of prayer for the promised advancement of his kingdom on earth—which is God's great aim in all preceding providences, and the main thing that the spirit of prayer in the saints aims at—then the fulfilment of this event is nigh.

God, in wonderful grace, is pleased to represent himself, as it were, *at the command* of his people with regard to mercies of this nature, so as as to be ready to bestow them whenever they shall earnestly pray for them: Isai. xlv. 11. "Thus saith the Lord, the holy One of Israel, and his Maker, Ask of me of things to come concerning my sons, and concerning the work of my hands, command ye me." What God is speaking of in this context, is the restoration of his church, not only a restoration from temporal calamity and an outward captivity by Cyrus; but also a spiritual restoration and advancement, by God's commanding the heavens to "drop down from above, and the skies to pour down righteousness, and causing the earth to open and bring forth salvation, and righteousness to spring up together," ver. 8. God would have his

people ask of him, or enquire of him by earnest prayer, to do this for them ; and manifests himself as being at the command of earnest prayers for such a mercy : and a reason why God is so ready to hear such prayers is couched in the words, viz.— Because it is prayer for his own church, his chosen and beloved people, "his sons and daughters, and the work of his hands;" and he cannot deny any thing that is asked for their comfort and prosperity.

God speaks of himself as standing ready to be *gracious* to his church, and to appear for its restoration, and only *waiting* for such an opportunity to bestow this mercy, when he shall hear the cries of his people for it, that he may bestow it in answer to their prayers. Isai. xxx. 18, 19. "Therefore will the Lord wait, that he may be gracious to thee ; and therefore will he be exalted, that he may have mercy upon you ; for the Lord is a God of judgment : Blessed are all they that wait for him. For the people shall dwell in Zion at Jerusalem. Thou shalt weep no more ; he will be very gracious unto thee, at the voice of thy cry ; when he shall hear it, he will answer thee." The words imply, that when God once sees his people much engaged in praying for this mercy, it shall be no longer delayed. Christ desires to "hear the voice of his spouse, who is in the clefts of the rock, in the secret places of the stairs ;" in a low and obscure state, driven into secret corners ; he only waits for this in order to put an end to her state of affliction, and to cause the "day to break and the shadows to flee away." If he once heard her voice in earnest prayer, he would come swiftly over the *mountains of separation* between him and her, *as a roe, or young hart.* (Sol. Song ii. 14, &c.)

When his church is in a low state, and oppressed by her enemies, and cries to him, he will swiftly fly to her relief, as birds fly at the cry of their young ; (Isai. xxxi. 5.) Yea, when that glorious day comes, before they call, he will answer them, and while they are yet speaking, he will hear ; and in answer to their prayers, he will make the wolf and the lamb feed together, &c. (Isai. lxv. 24, 25.) When the spouse prays for the effusion of the Holy Spirit, and the coming of Christ, by granting the tokens of his spiritual presence in the church, (Cant. iv. 15.) "Awake, O north wind, and come, thou south, blow upon my garden, that the spices thereof may flow out ; let my beloved come into his garden, and eat his pleasant fruits ;" there seems to be an immediate answer to her prayer, in the next words, in abundant communications of the Spirit, and bestowment of spiritual blessings ; "I am come into my garden, my sister, my spouse ; I have gathered my myrrh with my spice : I have eaten my honey-comb with my honey : I have

drunk my wine with my milk. Eat, O friends; drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved."

Scripture instances and examples of *success* in prayer give great encouragement to pray for this mercy. Most of the remarkable deliverances and restorations of the church of God, mentioned in the scriptures, were in answer to prayer. For instance, the redemption of the church of God from the Egyptian bondage.* It was in answer to prayer, that the sun stood still over Gibeon, and the moon in the valley of Aijalon, and God's people obtained that great victory over their enemies; in which wonderful miracle, God seemed to have some respect to a future more glorious event to be accomplished for the Christian church, in the day of her victory over her enemies, in the latter days: even that event foretold; Isai. xl. 20. "Thy sun shall no more go down, neither shall thy moon withdraw itself."

It was in answer to prayer, that God delivered his church from the mighty hosts of the Assyrians, in Hezekiah's time; which dispensation is a type of the great things God will do for the christian church in the latter days. The restoration of the church of God from the Babylonish captivity, as abundantly appears both by scripture prophecies, and histories, was in answer to extraordinary prayer.† This restoration of the Jewish church, after the destruction of Babylon, is evidently a type of the glorious restoration of the christian church, after the destruction of the kingdom of *antichrist;* which is abundantly spoken of in the revelation of St. John, as the antitype of Babylon. Sampson out of weakness, received strength to pull down Dagon's temple, through prayer. So the people of God, in the latter days, will out of weakness be made strong, and will become the instruments of pulling down the kingdom of Satan by prayer.

The spirit of God was poured out upon Christ himself, in answer to prayer; Luke iii. 21, 22. "Now when all the people were baptised, it came to pass, that Jesus also being baptised, and *praying*, the heaven was opened, and the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape, like a dove, upon him; and a voice came from heaven, which said, thou art my beloved Son, in thee I am well pleased." The spirit descends on the church of Christ the same way, in this respect, that it descended on the head of the church. The greatest effusion of the spirit that ever yet has been, even that which was in the primitive times of the christian church, which began

* Exod. ii. 23. and iii 7. The great restoration of the church in the latter day, is spoken of as resembled by this; as Isai. lxiv. 1—4—xi 11, 15, 16—xliii. 2, 3, 16—19—li. 10, 11, 15.—lxiii. 11, 12, 13. Zach. 10, 11. Hos. ii. 14, 15.

† See Jer. xxix. 10—14. and l. 4, 5. Dan. ix. throughout. Ezra viii. 21, &c. Neh. i. 4 to the end.—iv. 4, 5. and chap. ix. throughout

in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost, was in answer to extraordinary prayer. When the disciples were gathered together to their Lord, a little before his ascension, *he commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which*, saith he, *ye have heard of me*, i. e. the promise of the Holy Ghost, Acts i. 4. What they had their hearts upon was the restoration of the kingdom of Israel: "Lord," say they, "wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?" (ver. 6.) And according to Christ's direction, after his ascension they returned to Jerusalem, and continued in *united fervent prayer* and supplication. It seems they spent their time in it from day to day without ceasing, till the Spirit came down in a wonderful manner upon them; and that work was begun which never ceased, and all the chief nations were converted to christianity. And that glorious deliverance and advancement of the christian church, that was in the days of *Constantine the Great*, followed the extraordinary cries of the church of God, as the matter is represented, Rev. vi. at the opening of the fifth seal. The church in her suffering state is represented crying with a loud voice, "How long, Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge, and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?" And the opening of the next seal brings on that mighty revolution, in the days of Constantine, compared to those great changes that shall be at the end of the world.

As there is so great and manifold reason from the word of God, to think that if a spirit of earnest prayer for that great effusion of the Spirit of God which I am speaking of, prevailed in the christian church, the mercy would be soon granted; so those that are engaged in such prayer might well expect the first benefit. God will come to those that are seeking him and waiting for him; Isai. xxv. 9. and xxvi. 8. When Christ came in the flesh, he was first revealed to them who were waiting for the consolation of Israel, and looking for redemption in Jerusalem, Luke i. 25, 38. And in that great outpouring of the spirit that was in the days of the apostles, which was attended with such glorious effects among the Jews and Gentiles, the spirit came down first on those that were engaged in united earnest prayer for it.—A special blessing is promised to them that love and pray for the prosperity of the church of God, Psalm cxxxii. 6. Pray for the peace of Jerusalem. They shall prosper that love thee.

SECT. VI.

Motives to excite us.

We are presented with many motives in the dispensations of divine providence, at this day, to excite us to be much in prayer for this mercy. There is much in providence to shew us our need of it, and put us on desiring it. The great outward calamities in which the world is involved, and particularly the bloody war that embroils and wastes the nations of Christendom, and in which our nation has so great a share, may well make all that believe God's word and love mankind, earnestly long and pray for that day when the wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the nations shall beat their swords into plow-shares.

But especially do the spiritual calamities and miseries of the present time, shew our great need of that blessed effusion of God's Spirit: there having been, for so long a time, so great a withholding of the Spirit from the greater part of the christian world, and such dismal consequences of it in the great decay of vital piety, and the exceeding prevalence of infidelity, heresy, and all manner of vice and wickedness. Of this a most affecting account has lately been published in a pamphlet, printed in London, and re-printed in Scotland, entitled *Britain's Remembrancer;* by which it seems that luxury and wickedness of almost every kind, is well nigh come to the utmost extremity in the nation; and if vice should continue to prevail and increase for one generation more, as it has the generation past, it looks as though the nation could hardly continue in being, but must sink under the weight of its own corruption and wickedness.

And the state of things in the other parts of the British dominions, besides England, is very deplorable. The church of Scotland has very much lost her glory, greatly departing from her ancient purity and excellent order; and has of late been bleeding with great and manifold wounds, occasioned by their divisions and hot contentions. And there are frequent complaints from thence, by those that lament the corruptions of that land, of sin and wickedness of innumerable kinds, abounding and prevailing of late among all ranks of men. And how lamentable is the moral and religious state of those American colonies? of New England in particular? How much is that kind of religion which was professed, much experience, and practice, in the *first* and apparently the *best* times in New-England, grown and growing out of credit? What fierce and

violent contentions have been of late amongst ministers and people, about things of a religious nature? How much is the gospel-ministry grown into contempt? and the work of the ministry in many respects laid under uncommon difficulties, and even in danger of sinking amongst us? How many of our congregations and churches rending in pieces? Church discipline weakened, and ordinances less and less regarded? What wild and extravagant notions, gross delusions of the devil, and strange practices have prevailed, and do still prevail in many places under a pretext of extraordinary purity, spirituality, liberty, and zeal against formality, usurpation, and conformity to the world? How strong, deeply rooted, and general are the prejudices that prevail against vital religion and the power of godliness, and almost every thing that appertains to it or tends to it? How apparently are the hearts of people, every where, uncommonly shut up against all means and endeavours to awaken sinners and revive religion? Vice and immorality of all kinds withal increasing and unusually prevailing?—May not an attentive view and consideration of such a state of things well influence the people that favour the dust of Zion, to earnestness in their cries to God for a general outpouring of his spirit, which alone can be an effectual remedy for these evils?

Besides, the fresh attempts made by the antichristian powers against the Protestant interest, in their late endeavours to restore a popish government in Great Britain, the chief bulwark of the Protestant cause; as also the persecution lately revived against the Protestants in France, may well give occasion to the people of God to renewed and extraordinary earnestness in their prayers to him for the fulfilment of the promised downfall of antichrist, and that liberty and glory of his church that shall follow.

As there is much in the present state of things to shew us our great need of this mercy, and to cause us to desire it; so there is very much to convince us, that *God alone can bestow it*, and shew us our entire and absolute dependence on him for it. The insufficiency of human abilities to bring to pass any such happy change in the world as is foretold, or to afford any remedy to mankind from such miseries as have been mentioned, does now remarkably appear. Those observations of the apostle, 1 Cor. i. "The world by wisdom knows not God, and God makes foolish the wisdom of this world," never were verified to such a degree as they are now. Great discoveries have been made in the arts and sciences, and never was human learning carried to such a height as in the present age; and yet never did the cause of religion and virtue run so low, in nations professing the true religion. Never was there an age wherein so many learned and elaborate treatises have been written, in

proof of the truth and divinity of the christian religion; yet never were there so many infidels among those that were brought up under the light of the gospel. It is an age, as is supposed, of great light, freedom of thought, discovery of truth in matters of religion, detection of the weakness and bigotry of our ancestors, and of the folly and absurdity of the notions of those who were accounted eminent divines in former generations; which notions, it is imagined, destroyed the very foundations of virtue and religion, and enervated all precepts of morality, and in effect annulled all difference between virtue and vice; and yet vice and wickedness did never so prevail, like an overflowing deluge. It is an age wherein those mean and stingy principles, as they are called, of our forefathers, which are supposed to have deformed religion and led to unworthy thoughts of God, are very much discarded and grown out of credit, and thoughts of the nature of religion and of the christian scheme, supposed to be more free, noble, and generous, are entertained. But yet never was there an age, wherein religion in general was so much despised and trampled on, and Jesus Christ and God Almighty so blasphemed and treated with open daring contempt.

The exceeding *weakness* of mankind, and their *insufficiency* in themselves for bringing to pass any thing great and good in the world, with regard to its moral and spiritual state, remarkably appears in many things that have attended and followed the extraordinary religious commotion, that has lately been in many parts of Great Britain and America. The infirmity of human nature has been manifested, in a very affecting manner, in the various passions of men, and the innumerable ways in which they have been moved, as a reed shaken with the wind, on occasion of the changes and incidents, both public and private, of such a state of things. How many errors and extremes are we liable to? How quickly blinded, misled, and confounded. And how easily does *Satan* make fools of men, if confident in their own wisdom and strength, and left to themselves? Many, in the late wonderful season, were ready to admire and trust in men, as if all depended on such and such instruments, at least ascribed too much to their skill and zeal, because God was pleased to employ them a little while to do extraordinary things; but what great things does the skill and zeal of instruments do now, when the Spirit of God is withdrawn?

As the present state of things may well excite earnest desires after the promised general revival and advancement of true religion, and serve to shew our dependence on God for it, so there are many things in *providence*, of late, that tend to *encourage* us in prayer for such a mercy. That infidelity, heresy and vice, do so prevail, and that corruption and wicked-

ness are risen to such an extreme height, is exceeding deplorable; but yet, I think, considering God's promises to his church, and the ordinary method of his dispensations, hope may justly be gathered from it, that the present state of things will not last long, but that a happy change is nigh. We know that God never will desert the cause of truth and holiness, nor suffer the gates of hell to prevail against the church; and that usually from the beginning of the world, the state of the church has appeared most dark, just before some remarkable deliverance and advancement: 'Many a time, may Israel say, Had not the Lord been on our side, then our enemies would have swallowed us up quick.—The waters had overwhelmed us.' The church's extremity has often been God's opportunity for magnifying his power, mercy and faithfulness, towards her. The interest of vital piety has long been in general decaying, and error and wickedness prevailing: it looks as though the disease were now come to a crisis, and that things cannot remain long in such a state, but that a change may be expected in one respect or other.

And not only God's manner of dealing with his church in former ages, and many things in the promises and prophecies of his word, but also several things appertaining to present and late aspects of divine providence, seem to give reason to hope that the change will be such as to magnify God's free grace and sovereign mercy, and not his revenging justice and wrath. There are certain times which are days of vengeance, appointed for the more special displays of God's justice and indignation. God has also his days of mercy, accepted times, chosen seasons, wherein it is his pleasure to shew mercy, and nothing shall hinder it; times appointed for the magnifying of the Redeemer and his merits, and for the triumphs of his grace, wherein his grace shall triumph over men's unworthiness in its greatest height. And if we consider God's late dealings with our nation and this land, it appears to me that there is much to make us think that this is such a day.*

* Particularly God's preserving and delivering the nation, when in so great danger of ruin by the late rebellion; and his preserving New England, and the other British colonies in America, in so remarkable a manner, from the great armament from France, prepared and sent against us the last year; and the almost miraculous success given us against our enemies at Cape-Breton the year before, disappointing their renewed preparations and fresh attempt against these colonies, this present year, (1747,) by delivering up the strength of their fleet into the hands of the English, as they were in their way hither. And also in protecting us from time to time from armies by land that have come against us from Canada, since the beginning of the present war with France. Besides many strange instances of protection of particular forts and settlements, shewing a manifest interposition of the hand of heaven, to the observation of some of our enemies, and even of the savages. And added to these, the late unexpected restoring of the greater part of our many captives in Canada, by those that held them prisoners there. It appears to me, that God has gone much out of his usual way, in his exercises of mercy, patience and long-suffering, in these instances.

God's patience was very wonderful of old, towards the ten tribes and the people of Judah and Jerusalem, and afterwards to the Jews in the times of Christ and the apostles; but it seems to me, all things considered, not equal to his patience and mercy to us. God does not only forbear to destroy us, notwithstanding all our provocations, but he has wrought great things for us, wherein his hand has been most visible and his arm made bare; especially those two instances in America, God succeeding us against Cape-Breton, and confounding the armada from France the last year; dispensations of Providence which, if considered in all their circumstances, were so wonderfully, and apparently manifesting an extraordinary divine interposition, that they come perhaps the nearest to a parallel with God's wonderful works of old, in the times of Moses, Joshua, and Hezekiah, of any that have been in these latter ages of the world. And it is to my present purpose to observe, that God was pleased to do great things for us in both these instances, in answer to *extraordinary prayer*. Such remarkable appearances of a spirit of prayer, on any particular public occasion, have not been in the land, at any time within my observation and memory, as on occasion of the affair of Cape-Breton. And it is worthy to be remembered, that God sent that great storm on the fleet of our enemies the last year, that finally dispersed, and utterly confounded them, and caused them wholly to give over their designs against us, the very night after our day of public fasting and prayer for our protection and their confusion.

Thus, although it be a day of great apostacy and provocation, yet it is apparently a day of the wonderful works of God; wonders of power and mercy; which may well lead us to think on those two places of scripture; Psal. cxix. 126. "It is time for thee, Lord, to work, for they have made void thy law." And Psal. lxxv. 1. "That thy name is near, thy wondrous works declare"—God appears, as it were, loth to destroy us, or deal with us according to our iniquities, great and aggravated as they are; and shews that mercy pleases him. Though a corrupt time, it is plain by experience that it is a time wherein God may be found, and he stands ready to shew mercy in answer to prayer. He that hath done such great things, and has so wonderfully and speedily answered prayer for temporal mercies, will much more give the Holy Spirit if we ask him. He marvellously preserves us, and waits to be gracious to us, as though he chose to make us monuments of his grace and not of his vengeance, and waits only to have us open our mouths wide, that he may fill them.

The late remarkable *religious awakenings*, in many parts of the christian world, may justly encourage us in prayer for the promised glorious and universal outpouring of the Spirit

of God. "About the year 1732 or 1733, God was pleased to pour out his Spirit on the people of Saltizburg, in Germany, who where living under popish darkness, in a most uncommon manner; so that above twenty thousand of them, merely by reading the Bible, which they made a shift to get in their own language, were determined to throw off popery and embrace the reformed religion; yea, and to become so very zealous for the truth and gospel of Jesus Christ, as to be willing to suffer the loss of all things in the world, and actually to forsake their houses, lands, goods and relations, that they might enjoy the pure preaching of the gospel;—with great earnestness, and tears in their eyes, beseeching protestant ministers to preach to them, in different places where they came, when banished from their own country." In the year 1734 and 1735, there appeared a very great and general awakening, in the country of Hampshire, in the province of the Massachusetts-Bay, in New England, and also in many parts of Connecticut. Since this, there has been a far more extensive awakening of many thousands in England, Wales, and Scotland, and almost all the British provinces in North America. There has also been something remarkable of the same kind, in some places in the united Netherlands; and about two years ago, a very great awakening and reformation of many of the Indians, in the Jerseys, and Pennsylvania, even among such as never embraced christianity before: and within these two years, a great awakening in Virginia and Maryland.

Notwithstanding the great diversity of opinions about the issue of some of these awakenings, yet I know of none, who have denied that there have been great awakenings of late in these times and places, and that multitudes have been brought to more than common concern for their salvation, and for a time were made more than ordinarily afraid of sin, and brought to reform their former vicious courses, and take much pains for their salvation. If I should be of the opinion of those who think that these awakenings and striving of God's Spirit have been generally not well improved, and so, as to most, have ended in enthusiasm and delusion; yet that the Spirit of God has been of late so wonderfully striving with such multitudes—in so many different parts of the world, and even to this day in one place or other, continues to awaken men—is what I should take great encouragement from that God was about to do something more glorious, and would before he finishes, bring things to a greater ripeness, and not finally suffer this work of his to be frustrated and rendered abortive by Satan's crafty management. And may we not hope that these unusual commotions are the forerunners of something exceeding glorious approaching; as the wind, earthquake and fire at Mount

Sinai, were forerunners of that voice wherein God was in a more eminent manner? (1 Kings xix. 11, 12.)

SECT. VII.

The Beauty and good Tendency of such Union.

How *condecent*, how *beautiful*, and of *good tendency* would it be, for multitudes of christians, in various parts of the world, by *explicit agreement*, to unite in such prayer as is proposed to us. *Union* is one of the most *amiable* things that pertains to human society; yea, it is one of the most beautiful and happy things on earth, which indeed makes earth most like heaven. God has made of one blood all nations of men, to dwell on all the face of the earth; hereby teaching us this moral lesson, that it becomes mankind all to be united as one family. And this is agreeable to the nature God has given men, disposing them to society; and the circumstances in which he has placed them, so many ways obliging and necessitating them to it. A *civil* union, or an harmonious agreement among men in the management of their secular concerns, is amiable; but much more a pious union, and sweet agreement in the great business for which man was created, even the business of religion; the life and soul of which is LOVE. Union is spoken of in scripture as the peculiar beauty of the church of Christ, Cant. vi. 9. "My dove, my undefiled is but one, she is the only one of her mother, she is the choice one of her that bare her; the daughters saw her and blessed her, yea, the queens and the concubines, and they praised her." Psal. cxxii. 5. "Jerusalem is builded as a city that is compact together." Eph. iv. 3—6. "Endeavouring to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body, and one spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God, and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all." Ver. 16. "The whole body fitly framed together and compacted, by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working, in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body, unto the edifying itself in love."

As it is the glory of the church of Christ that in all her members, however dispersed, she is thus *one*, one holy society, one city, one family, one body; so it is very desirable that this union should be *manifested*, and become visible. It is highly desirable that her distant members should act as *one*, in those things that concern the common interest of the whole body, and in those duties and exercises wherein they have to do with their common Lord and Head, as seeking of him the

common prosperity. As it becomes all the members of a particular family, who are strictly united, and have in so many respects one common interest, to unite in prayer to God for the things they need; and as it becomes a nation, at certain seasons, visibly to unite in prayer for those public mercies that concern the interest of the whole nation: so, it becomes the church of Christ—which is one holy nation, a peculiar people, one heavenly family, more strictly united, in many respects, and having infinitely greater interests that are common to the whole, than any other society—visibly to unite, and expressly to agree together in prayer to God for the common prosperity; and above all, that common prosperity and advancement, so unspeakably great and glorious, which God hath so abundantly promised to fulfil in the latter days.

It becomes christians, with whose character a narrow selfish spirit, above all others, disagrees, to be much in prayer for that public mercy, wherein consists the welfare and happiness of the whole body of Christ, of which they are members, and the greatest good of mankind. And union or agreement in prayer is especially becoming, when christians pray for that mercy, which above all other things concerns them unitedly, and tends to the relief, prosperity and glory of the whole body, as well as of each individual member.

Such an union in prayer for the general out-pouring of the Spirit of God, would not only be beautiful, but profitable too. It would tend very much to promote union and charity between distant members of the church of Christ, to promote public spirit, love to the church of God, and concern for the interest of Zion; as well as be an amiable exercise and manifestation of such a spirit. Union in religious duties, especially in the duty of prayer, in praying one with and for another, and jointly for their common welfare, above almost all other things, tends to promote mutual affection and endearment. And if ministers and people should, by particular agreement and joint resolution, set themselves, in a solemn and extraordinary manner, from time to time, to pray for the revival of religion in the world, it would naturally tend more to awaken in them a concern about things of this nature, and more of a desire after such a mercy. It would engage them to more attention to such an affair, make them more inquisitive about it, more ready to use endeavours to promote what they, with so many others, spend so much time in praying for. It would make them more ready to rejoice, and praise God, when they see or hear of any thing of that nature or tendency. And, in a particular manner, it would naturally tend to engage ministers—the business of whose lives it should be, to seek the welfare of the church of Christ, and the advancement of his kingdom—to greater diligence and earnestness in their work; and it would have a

tendency to the spiritual profit and advantage of each particular person. For persons to be thus engaged in extraordinary prayer for the revival and flourishing state of religion in the world, will naturally lead each one to reflect on *himself*, and consider how religion flourishes in his own heart, and how far his example contributes to that for which he is praying.

On the whole there is a great and particular encouragement given in the word of God, to express union and agreement in prayer. Daniel, when he had a great thing to request of God, viz. That he by his Holy Spirit would miraculously reveal to him a great secret, which none of the wise men, astrologers, magicians, or soothsayers of Babylon could find out, he goes to Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, his companions, and they agree together, that they will unitedly desire mercies of the God of heaven, concerning this secret; and their joint request was soon granted. God put great honour upon them, above all the wise men of Babylon, not only to their great joy, but also to the admiration and astonishment of Nebuchadnezzar; insomuch that the great and haughty monarch, as we are told, fell upon his face and worshipped Daniel, and owned that *his God was in truth, A God of Gods*, and he greatly promoted Daniel and his praying companions in the province of Babylon. Esther, when she had a yet more important request to make, for the saving of the church of God, and whole Jewish nation, dispersed through the empire of Persia, when on the brink of ruin, sends to all the Jews in the city Shushan, to pray and fast with her and her maidens; and their *united prayers* prevail; so that the event was wonderful. Instead of the intended destruction of the Jews, their enemies are destroyed every where, and they are defended, honoured, and promoted; their sorrow and distress is turned into great gladness, feasting, triumph, and mutual joyful congratulations.

The encouragement to explicit agreement in prayer is great from such instances as these; but it is yet greater from those wonderful words of our blessed Redeemer, Matth. xviii. 19. "I say unto you, that if any two of you shall agree on earth, touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven." Christ is pleased to give this great encouragement to the union of his followers in this excellent and holy exercise of seeking and serving God; an holy union and communion of his people being that which he greatly desires and delights in; that which he came into the world to bring to pass; that which he especially prayed for with his dying breath; (John xvii.) that which he died for; and which was one chief end of the whole affair of our redemption by him; Eph. i. "In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace, wherein he hath abounded towards us in all wisdom and prudence:

having made known to us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure, which he hath purposed in himself: that in the dispensation of the fulness of times, he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth, even in him."

PART III.

Objections Answered.

I come now, as was proposed, in the *third* place, to answer and obviate some objections, which some may be ready to make against what has been proposed to us.

SECT. I.

Such Agreement superstitious, Answered.

Some may be ready to say, that for christians in such a manner to set apart *certain seasons*, every week and every quarter, to be religiously observed and kept for the purposes proposed, from year to year, would be in effect to *establish* certain periodical times of *human* invention and appointment, to be *kept holy to God;* and so to do the very thing that has ever been objected against, by a very great part of the most eminent christians and divines among protestants, as what men have no right to do; it being for them to *add* to God's institutions, and introduce their own inventions and establishments into the stated worship of God, and lay unwarrantable bonds on men's consciences, and do what naturally tends to *superstition.*

To this I would say, there can be no justice in such an objection against this proposal, as made to us in the foremen-tioned *memorial.* Indeed, that caution appears in the project itself, and in the manner in which it is proposed to us, that there is not so much as any colour for the objection. The proposal is such, and so well guarded, that there seems to be no room for the weakest christian who well observes it, to understand those things to be implied in it, which have indeed been objected against by many eminent christians and divines

among Protestants, as entangling men's consciences, and adding to divine institutions, &c.—Here is no pretence of establishing any thing by *authority;* no appearance of any claim of *power* in the proposers, or *right* to have any regard paid to their determinations or proposals, by virtue of any deference due to *them*, in any respect. So far from that, they expressly propose what they have thought of to others for their amendments and improvements, declaring that they choose rather to receive and spread the directions and proposals of others, than to be the first authors of any.

No times, not sanctified by God's own institution, are proposed to be observed more than others, under any notion of such times being in any respect more holy, or more honourable, or worthy of any preference or distinguishing regard; either as being sanctified or made honourable, by authority or by any great events of divine providence, or any relation to any holy persons or things; but only as circumstantially convenient, helpful to memory, especially free from worldly business, near to the times of the administration of public ordinances, &c. None attempts to lay any bonds on others, with respect to this matter; or to desire that they should lay any bonds on themselves; or look on themselves as under any obligations, either by power or promise; or so much as come into any absolute determination in their own minds to set apart any stated days from secular affairs; or even to fix on any part of such days, without liberty to alter circumstances, as shall be found expedient; and also liberty left to a future alteration of judgment as to expediency, on future trial and consideration. All that is proposed is, that such as fall in with what is proposed in their judgments and inclinations, while they do so should strengthen, assist and encourage their brethren that are of the same mind, by visibly consenting and joining with them in the affair. Is here any thing like making laws in matters of conscience and religion, or adding men's institutions to God's; or any shew of imposition, or superstitious esteeming and preferring one day above another, or any possible ground of entanglement of any one's conscience?

For men to go about by law to establish and limit circumstances of worship, not established or limited by any law of God, such as precise time, place, and order, may be in many respects of dangerous tendency. But surely it cannot be unlawful or improper for christians to come into some agreement, with regard to these circumstances: for it is impossible to carry on any social worship without it. There is no institution of scripture requiring any people to meet together to worship God in such a spot of ground, or at such an hour of the day; but yet these must be determined by agreement; or else there will be no social worship in any place, or any hour. So we

are not determined by institution, what the precise order of the different parts of worship shall be; what shall precede, and what shall follow; whether praying or singing shall be first, and what shall be next, and what shall conclude: but yet some order must be agreed on by the congregation that unite in worship; otherwise they cannot jointly carry on divine worship, in any way of method at all. If a congregation of christians agree to begin their public worship with *prayer*, next to *sing*, then to attend on the *preaching* of the word, and to conclude with *prayer;* and do by consent carry on their worship in this order from year to year; though this order is not appointed in scripture, none will call it *superstition.* And if a great number of congregations, through a whole land or more lands than one, do by common consent keep the same method of public worship, none will pretend to find fault with it. But yet for any to go about to bind all to such a method, would be usurpation and imposition. And if such a precise order should be regarded as sacred, as though no other could be acceptable to God, this would be superstition. If a particular number of christians shall agree, that besides the stated public worship of the sabbath, they will, when their circumstances allow, meet together to carry on some religious exercises, on a sabbath-day night, for their mutual edification; or if several societies agree to meet together in different places at that time; this is no superstition; though there be no institution for it. If people in different congregations voluntarily agree to take turns to meet together in the house of God, to worship him and hear a public lecture once a month, or once in six weeks, it is not unlawful; though there be no institution for it: but yet, to do this as a thing sacred, indispensable, and binding on men's consciences, would be superstition. If christians of several neighbouring congregations, instead of a lecture, agree on some special occasion to keep a *circular fast*, each congregation taking its turn in a certain time and order, fixed on by consent; or if, instead of keeping fast by turns on different days, one on one week and one on another, they shall all agree to keep a fast on the *same day*, and to do this either once or frequently, according as they shall judge their own circumstances, or the dispensations of the divine providence, or the importance of the mercy they seek, require; is there any more superstition in this?

SECT. II.

That such Agreement is whimsical and pharisaical, answered.

Some may be ready to say, there seems to be something *whimsical* in its being insisted on that God's people in different places should put up their prayers for this mercy *at the same time:* as though their prayers would be more *forcible* on that account; and as if God would not be so likely to hear prayers offered up by many, though they happened not to pray at the same time, as he would if he heard them all at the same moment.

To this I would say if such an objection be made, it must be through misunderstanding. It is not signified or implied in any thing said in the proposal, or in any arguments made use of to enforce it, that I have seen, that the prayers of a great number in different places will be more forcible, merely because of that circumstance, of their being put up at the same time. It is indeed supposed, that it will be very expedient, that certain times for united prayer should be agreed on: which it may be, without implying the thing supposed in the objection, on the following accounts.

1. This seems to be a proper expedient for promoting and maintaining an *union* among christians of distant places, in *extraordinary prayer* for such *a* mercy. It appears from what was before observed, that there ought to be *extraordinary* prayers among christians for this mercy; and that it is fit, God's people should agree and unite in it. Though there be no reason to suppose that prayers will be more prevalent, merely from the circumstance that different persons pray exactly *at the same time;* yet there will be more reason to hope that prayers for such mercy will be prevalent, when God's people are *very much in prayer* for it, and when many of them are *united* in it. If therefore agreeing on certain times for united and extraordinary prayer, be a likely means to promote an union of many in extraordinary prayer, then there is more reason to hope that there will be *prevalent* prayer for such a mercy, on occasion of certain times for extraordinary prayer being agreed on. But that agreeing on certain times for united extraordinary prayer, is a likely and proper means to promote and maintain such prayer, I think will be easily evident to any one that considers the matter. If there should be only a loose agreement or consent to it as a duty, or a thing fit and proper, that christians should be much in prayer for the revival of religion, and much more in it than they used to be, without agreeing on particular times, how liable would such a lax

agreement be to be soon forgotten, and that extraordinary prayerfulness, which is fixed to no certain times, to be totally neglected? To be sure, distant parts of the church of Christ could have no confidence in one another, that this would not be the case. If these ministers in Scotland, for instance, instead of the proposal they have made, had sent abroad only a general proposal, that God's people should for the time to come be much in more prayer for the advancement of Christ's kingdom, than had been common among christians heretofore; and they should hear their proposals were generally allowed to be good; and that ministers and people, in one place and another, owned that it was a very proper thing; could they, from this only, have the like grounds of dependence, that God's people, in various parts of the christian world, would indeed henceforward act unitedly in maintaining extraordinary prayer for this mercy? and how much more promising would it be, if they should not only hear that the duty in general was approved of, but also that particular times were actually fixed on for the purpose, and an agreement and joint resolution was come into, that they would, unless extraordinarily hindered, set apart such particular seasons to be spent in this duty, from time to time, maintaining this practice for a certain number of years?

2. For God's people in distant places to agree on certain times for extraordinary prayer, wherein they will unitedly put up their requests to God, is a means fit and proper to be used, in order to the *visibility* of their union in such prayer. Union among God's people in prayer is truly beautiful, as before shewn; it is beautiful in the eyes of Christ, and it is justly beautiful and amiable in the eyes of christians. And if so, then it must needs be desirable to christians that such union should be visible. If it would be a lovely sight in the eyes of the church of Christ, and much to their comfort, to behold various and different parts of the church *united* in extraordinary prayer for the general outpouring of the Spirit, then it must be desirable to them that such an union should be *visible*, that they may behold it. But the agreement and union of a multitude in their worship becomes visible, by an agreement in some external visible circumstances. Worship itself becomes visible worship, by something external and visible belonging to the worship, and no other way; therefore, union and agreement of many in worship becomes visible no other way, but by union and agreement in the external and visible acts and circumstances of the worship. Such union and agreement becomes visible, particularly by an agreement in those two visible circumstances, time and place. When a number of Christians live near together, and their number and situation is convenient, and they have a desire visibly to unite in any acts of

worship, they are wont to make their union and agreement visible by an union in both these circumstances. But when a much greater number of christians, dwelling in distant places so that they cannot unite by worshipping in the same place, yet desire a visible union in some extraordinary worship; they are wont to make their union and agreement visible, by agreeing only in the former of those circumstances, viz. that of *time*. This is common in the appointment of public fasts and thanksgivings; the *same day* is appointed for the performance of that extraordinary worship, as a visible note of union. To this common sense leads christians in all countries. And the wisdom of God seems to dictate the same thing in appointing that his people, in their stated and ordinary public worship every week, should manifest this union and communion one with another, as one holy society; by offering up their worship on the same day; for the greater glory of their common Lord, and the greater edification and comfort of the whole body.

If any yet find fault with the proposal of certain times to be agreed on by God's people in different places, in the manner set forth in the memorial, I would ask, Whether they object against any such thing, as a visible agreement of God's people, in different parts of the world, in extraordinary prayer, for the coming of Christ's kingdom? Whether such a thing, being visible, would not be much for the public honour of God's name? And whether it would not tend to christians' assistance and encouragement in the duty, and also to their mutual comfort, by a manifestation of that union which is amiable to Christ and christians, and to promote a christian union among professing christians in general? And whether we have not reason to think, from the word of God, that before that great revival of religion foretold is accomplished, there will be a visible union of the people of God, in various parts of the world, in extraordinary prayer for this mercy? If these things are allowed, I would then ask further, whether any method can be thought of or devised, whereby an express agreement and visible union of God's people, in different parts of the world, can be maintained, but this, or some other equivalent to it? If there be any express agreement about any extraordinary prayer at all, it must first be proposed by some, and others must fall in, as represented in my text. And if extraordinary prayer be agreed on, and maintained by many in different places, visibly one to another, then it must be agreed with regard to some circumstances, what extraordinary prayer shall be kept up; and this must be seen and heard of, from one to another. But how shall this be, when *no times* are agreed upon, and it is never known, by those in different parts when, or how often, any others do attend this extraordinary

prayer? The consequence must necessarily be, that it can neaer be known how far, or in what respect others join with them in extraordinary prayer, or whether they do it at all; and not so much as one circumstance of extraordinary prayer will be *visible;* and indeed nothing will be visible about it. So that I think any body that well considers the matter, will see that he who determines to oppose such a method as is proposed to us in the memorial, and all others equivalent to it, is, in effect, determined to oppose there ever being any such thing at all, as an agreed and visibly united, extraordinary prayer, in the church of God, for a general outpouring of the Spirit.

3. Though it would not be reasonable to suppose that merely such a circumstance, as many people praying at the same time, will directly have any prevalence with God; yet such a circumstance may reasonably be supposed to have influence on the minds of *men.* Will any deny, that it has any reasonable tendency to encourage, animate, or in any respect to help the mind of a christian in serving God in any duty of religion, to join with a christian congregation, and to see an assembly of his dear brethren around him, at the same time engaged with him in the same duty? And supposing one in this assembly of saints is blind, but has ground of satisfaction that there is present a multitude of God's people united with him in the same service; will any deny, that his supposing this, and being satisfied of it, can have any reasonable influence upon his mind to excite and encourage him, or in any respect to assist him, in his worship? The encouragement that one has in worship, by others being united with him, is not merely by the external senses, but by the knowledge the mind has of that union, or the satisfaction the understanding has that others, at that time, have their minds engaged with him in the same service; which may be, when those unitedly engaged are at a distance one from another, as well as when they are present. If one be present in a worshipping assembly, and sees their external behaviour; their union with him in worship he does not see; and what he sees, encourages him in worship, only as an evidence of that union and concurrence which is out of sight. And persons may have such evidence of this, concerning absent worshippers, as may give him satisfaction of their union with him, no less than if they were present: And therefore the consideration of others being at the same time engaged with him in worship, though absent, may as reasonably animate and encourage him in his worship, as if they were present.

There is no wisdom in finding fault with human nature, as God has made it. Things that exist now, are in themselves

no more important, than the like things in time past, or in time to come: yet it is evident that the consideration of things being present, at least in most cases, especially affects human nature. For instance, if a man could be certainly informed that his dear child at a distance, was now under some extreme suffering; or that an absent most dear friend was at this time thinking of him, and in the exercise of great affection towards him, or in the performance of some great deed of friendship; or, if a pious parent should know that now his child was in the act of some enormous wickedness; or that, on the contrary, he was now in some eminent exercise of grace, and in the performance of an extraordinary deed of virtue and piety; would not those things be more affecting to human nature, for being considered as things at the present time, than if considered as at some distance of time, either past or future? Hundreds of other instances might be mentioned wherein it is no less plain, that the consideration of the present existence of things, gives them advantage to affect the minds of men. Yea, it is undoubtedly so with things in general, that take any hold at all of our affections, and towards which we are not indifferent. And if the mind of a particular child of God is disposed to be affected by the consideration of the religion of other saints, and of their union and concurrence with him in any particular duty or act of religion, I can see no reason why the human mind should not be more moved by the object of its affection, when considered as present, as well in this case, as in any other case: yea, I think, we may on good grounds determine there is none.

Nor may we look upon it as an instance of the peculiar *weakness* of human nature, that men are more affected with things considered as *present*, than those that are distant: but it seems to be a thing common to finite minds, and so to all created intelligent beings. Thus, the angels in heaven have peculiar joy on occasion of the conversion of a sinner, when recent, beyond what they have in that which has been long past. If any therefore shall call it silly and whimsical in any, to value and regard such a circumstance, in things of religion, as their existing at the present time, so as to be the more affected with them for that; they must call the host of angels in heaven a parcel of silly and whimsical beings.

I remember the *Spectator* (whom none will call a whimsical author) somewhere speaking of different ways of dear friends mutually expressing their affection, and maintaining a kind of intercourse, in absence one from another, mentions such an instance as this, with much approbation, viz. That two friends, who were greatly endeared one to another, when about to part, and to be for a considerable time necessarily absent, that they might have the comfort of the enjoy-

ment of daily mutual expressions of friendship in their absence; agreed that they would, every day, precisely at such an hour, retire from all company and business, to pray for one another. Which agreement they so valued and so strictly observed, that when the hour came, scarce any thing would hinder them. And rather than miss this opportunity, they would suddenly break off conversation, and abruptly leave company they were engaged with.—If this be a desirable way of intercourse of particular friends, is it not a desirable and amiable way of maintaining intercourse and fellowship between brethren in Christ Jesus, and the various members of the holy family of God, in different parts of the world, to come into an agreement, that they will set apart certain times, which they will spend with one accord, in extraordinary prayer to their heavenly Father, for the advancement of the kingdom, and the glory of their common dear Lord and Saviour, and for each other's prosperity and happiness, and the greatest good of all their fellow creatures through the world?

Some perhaps may suppose, that it looks too much like *Pharisaism*, when persons engage in any such extraordinary religious exercises, beyond what is appointed by express institution, for them thus designedly to make it manifest abroad in the world, and so openly to distinguish themselves from others. But all open engagement in extraordinary exercises of religion, not expressly enjoined by institution, is not *Pharisaism*, nor has ever been so reputed in the Christian church. As when a particular church or congregation of Christians agree together to keep a day of fasting and prayer, on some special occasion; or when public days of fasting and thanksgiving are kept, throughout a Christian province or country: and though it be ordinarily the manner for the civil magistrate to lead in setting apart such days; yet that alters not the case: if it be Pharisaism in the society openly to agree in such extraordinary exercises of religion, it is not less Pharisaism, for the heads of the society leading in the affair. And if the civil magistrate was not of the society of Christians, nor concerned himself in their affairs; yet this would not render it the less suitable for Christians, on proper occasions, jointly, and visibly one to another, to engage in such extraordinary exercises of religion, and to keep days of fasting and thanksgiving by agreement.

It cannot be objected against what is proposed in the memorial, that it would look like affecting singularity, and open distinction from others in extraordinary religion, like the *Pharisees* of old: because it is evident, the very design of the *memorial*, is not to promote singularity and distinction, but as much as possible to avoid and prevent it. The end of the *memorial* is not to limit the thing proposed, that it may be practised only by a few, in distinction from the generality; but on the con-

trary to make it as general among professing Christians as possible. Some had complied with the extraordinary duty proposed, and therein had been distinguished from others, for two years, before the memorial was published; and they were more distinguished than they desired; and therefore sent abroad this memorial, that the practice might be more spread, and become more general, that they might be less distinguished. What they evidently seek, is to bring to pass as general a compliance as possible of Christians of all denominations, intreating, that the desire of concurrence and assistance, contained in the memorial, may by no means be understood, as restricting to any particular denomination or party, or those who are of such or such opinions about any former instances of remarkable religious concern; but to be extended to all, who shall vouchsafe any attention to the proposal, and have at heart the interest of vital christianity, and the power of godliness: and who, however differing about other things, are convinced of the importance of fervent prayer, to promote that common interest, and of scripture persuasives, to promote such prayer.

SECT. III.

That such Agreement is premature, answered.

Another objection, very likely to arise in the minds of many against such extraordinary prayer for the speedy coming of Christ's kingdom, is, that we have *no reason to expect it*, till there first come a time of most extreme *calamity* to the church, and a prevalence of her *antichristian* enemies against her; even that which is represented in Rev. xi. by the *slaying of the witnesses;* but have reason to determine the contrary.

It is indeed an opinion that seems pretty much to have obtained, that before the fulfilment of the promises relating to the church's latter-day glory, there must come a most terrible time, a time of extreme suffering, and dreadful persecution of the church of Christ; wherein Satan and Antichrist are to obtain their greatest victory over her, and she is to be brought lower than ever by her enemies. This opinion has chiefly risen from the manner of interpreting and applying the forementioned prophecy of the slaying of the witnesses; and must needs be a great hindrance, with regard to such an affair as is proposed to us in the memorial. If persons expect no other, than that the more the glorious times of Christ's kingdom are hastened, the sooner will come this dreadful time, wherein the generality of God's people must suffer so extremely, and the church of Christ be almost extinguished, and blotted out from under heaven; how can it be otherwise, than a great damp to

their hope, their courage and activity, in praying for, and reaching after the speedy introduction of those glorious promised times? As long as this opinion is retained, it will undoubtedly ever have this unhappy influence on the minds of those that wish well to Zion. It will tend to damp, and keep down joyful expectation in prayer; and even in great measure to prevent all earnest, animated and encouraged prayer, in God's people for this mercy, at any time before it is actually fulfilled. For they who proceed on this hypothesis in their prayers, must, at the same time that they pray for this glorious day, naturally conclude within themselves, that they shall never live to see on earth any dawning of it, but only the dismal time that shall precede it; in which the far greater part of God's people who shall live till then, shall die under the extreme cruelties of their persecutors. And the more they expect that God will answer their prayers, by speedily bringing on the promised glorious day, the more must they expect themselves to have a share in those dreadful things, that nature shrinks at, and also expect to see what a renewed nature dreads; even the prevailing of God's enemies, and the almost total extinction of true religion in the world. And on this *hypothesis*, these discouragements are like to attend the prayers of God's people, till that dismal time be actually come: and when that is come, those who have been prophesying and praying in sackcloth, shall generally be slain: and after that time is over, then the glorious day shall immediately commence. So that this notion tends to discourage all earnest prayer in the church of God for that glorious coming of Christ's kingdom, till it be actually come: and that is to hinder its ever being at all.

This opinion being of such hurtful tendency, it is a thousand pities it should be retained, if truly there be no good ground for it. Therefore in answer to this objection, I would, with all humility and modesty, examine the foundation of that opinion, of such a dreadful time of victory of antichrist over the church, yet to be expected: and particularly shall endeavour to shew that the *slaying of the witnesses*, foretold, Rev. xi. 7—10. is not an event that remains yet to be fulfilled.—To this end, I would propose the following things to consideration.

1. The time wherein the *witnesses lie dead in the streets of the great city*, doubtless, signifies the time wherein the true church of Christ is lowest of all, most of all prevailed against by antichrist, and nearest to an utter extinction; the time wherein there is left the least visibility of the church of Christ yet subsisting in the world, least remains of any thing appertaining to true religion, whence a revival of it can be expected, and wherein all means of it are most abolished, and the state of the church is in all respects furthest from any hopes of

its ever flourishing again. For before this, the witnesses *prophecy in sackcloth:* but now they are *dead:* before this, they were kept low indeed, yet there was life, and power to bring plagues on their enemies, and so much of true religion left, as to be a continual torment to them. But now their enemies rejoice and feast, have a general public triumph, as having obtained a full victory over them. They have now entirely extirpated them, are completely delivered from them, and from all that might give them any fear of being troubled with them any more. This time, whenever it be fixed, doubtless, is the time, not only wherein fewest professors of the true religion are left in the world; but a time wherein the truth shall be farthest out of sight, and out of reach, and most forgotten; wherein there are left fewest beams of light, or traces of truth, fewest means of information, and opportunities of coming to the knowledge of the truth; and so a time of the most barbarous ignorance, most destitute of all history, monuments and memory of things appertaining to true religion, or things the knowledge of which hath any tendency to bring truth again to light; and most destitute of learning, study and enquiry.

Now, if we consider the present state of mankind, is it credible that a time will yet come, exceeding, in these respects, all times before the reformation? And that such a time will come before the fall of antichrist, unless we set that at a much greater distance, than the farthest that any have yet supposed? It is next to impossible, that such a change should be brought about in so short a time: it cannot be without a miracle. In order to it, not only must the popish nations so prevail, as utterly to extirpate the Protestant religion through the earth; but must do many other things far more impossible for them to effect, in order to cover the world with so gross and confirmed a darkness, and to bury all light and truth in so deep an oblivion, and so far out of all means and hopes of a revival. And not only must a vast change be made in the *Protestant* world, but the *Popish* nations must be strangely metamorphosed; and they themselves must be terribly persecuted by some other power, in order to bring them to such a change: nor would persecution without extirpation be sufficient for it. If there should be another universal deluge, it might be sufficient to bring things to such a pass; provided a few ignorant barbarous persons only were preserved in an ark: and it would require some catastrophe not much short of this to effect it.

2. At the *reformation*, in the days of Luther, Calvin, and others their contemporaries, the threatened destruction of antichrist, the dreadful enemy that had long oppressed and worn out the saints, was *begun*. Nor was it a small beginning; for antichrist hath fallen, at least half-way to the ground, from that height of power and grandeur he was in before. Then began

the vials of God's wrath to be *poured out on the throne of the beast*, to the great shaking of its foundations, and diminution of its extent; so that the Pope lost near half of his former dominions: and as to degree of authority and influence over what is left, he is not possessed of what he had before. God now at length, in answer to the long continued cries of his people, awaked as one out of sleep, and began to deliver his church from her exceeding low state, under the great oppression of this grand enemy, and to restore her from her exile and bondage in the spiritual Babylon and Egypt. It is not agreeable to the analogy of God's dispensations, that after this he should desert his people, hide himself from them even more than before, leave them more than ever in the hands of their enemy; and is it credible that all this advantage of the church against antichrist should be entirely given up and lost, his power and tyranny be more confirmed, the church more entirely subdued than ever before, and further from all help and means of recovery? This is not God's way of dealing with his people, or with their enemies. His work of salvation is perfect: when he has begun such a work he will carry it on: when he once causes the day of deliverance to dawn to his people, after such a long night of dismal darkness, he will not extinguish the light, and cause them to return again to midnight darkness. When he has begun to enkindle the blessed fire, he will not quench the smoking flax, till he hath brought forth judgment unto victory. When once the church, after long and sore travail, has brought forth her man child, and wrought some deliverance, her enemies shall never be able to destroy this child, though an infant: but it shall ascend up to heaven, and be set on high out of their reach.

The destruction that God often foretold and threatened to ancient Babylon (which is often referred to in the revelation, as a great type of the antichristian church) was gradually accomplished, by various steps at a great distance of time one from another. It was begun in the conquest of Cyrus; and was further accomplished by Darius, about *eighteen* years after, by a yet greater destruction, wherein it was brought much nearer to utter desolation; but it was about *two hundred and twenty three* years after this, before the ruin of it was perfected, and the prophecies against it fully accomplished, in its being made an utter and perpetual desolation, without any human inhabitant, becoming the dwelling-place for owls, dragons, and other doleful creatures. But yet when God had once begun to destroy her, he went on till he finished, and never suffered her any more to recover and establish her former empire. So the restitution of the Jewish church, after the Babylonish captivity, was by various steps; there were several times of return of the Jews from captivity, and several dis-

tinct decrees of the Persian emperors, for restoring and rebuilding Jerusalem, and re-establishing the Jewish church and state. It was also done in turbulent times; there were great interruptions, checks, and violent oppositions, and times wherein the enemy did much prevail. But yet when God had once begun the work, he also made an end; he never suffered the enemies of the Jews to bring Jerusalem to such a state of desolation as it had been in before, till the promised restoration was complete. Again, the deliverance of God's church from the oppression of Antiochus Epiphanes, (another known type of antichrist) was gradual; they were first assisted a little by the Maccabees; afterwards, the promised deliverance was completed in the recovery of Jerusalem, the restoration of the temple, the miserable end of Antiochus, and the consequent more full deliverance of the whole land. But after God once began to appear for the help of his church in that instance, though it had seemed dead and past all hope, he never suffered Antiochus to prevail to that degree again. The utmost strength of this great monarch was used, from time to time, in order to it, and his vast empire was engaged against a handful that opposed them; yet God never forsook the work of his own hands; when he had begun to deliver his people, he also made an end. And so Haman, that proud and inveterate enemy of the Jews, who thought to extirpate the whole nation, (who also was probably another type of antichrist) when he began to fall before Esther and Mordecai, never stayed till his ruin and the church's deliverance were complete; Haman's wife speaks of it as an argument of his approaching inevitable full destruction, that he *had begun to fall*, Est. vi. 16.

3. If antichristian tyranny and darkness should hereafter so prevail against the protestant church—the true religion and every thing appertaining to it—as to bring things to the pass forementioned, this would not so properly answer the prophecy of slaying the two witnesses; for doubtless, one reason why they are called two witnesses, is, that the number of witnesses for the truth, was, (though sufficient, yet) very small. This was remarkably the case in the dark times of popery; but since the reformation, the number of those appearing on the side of true religion, has not been so small. The visible church of Christ has been vastly large, in comparison of what it was before. The number of Protestants has sometimes been thought nearly equal to that of the papists; and, doubtless, the number of true saints has been far greater than before.

4. It seems to be signified in prophecy, that after the reformation antichrist should never prevail against the church of Christ any more, as he had done before. I cannot but think, that whoever reads and well considers what the learned Mr

LOWMAN has written on the five first vials (Rev. xvi.) in his late exposition on the Revelation, must think it to be very manifest, that what is said (ver. 10) of the pouring out of the fifth vial "on the throne of the beast," (for so it is in the original) is a prophecy of the reformation. Then the vial of God's wrath was poured out on the throne of the beast, i. e. according to the language of scripture, on his authority and dominion, greatly to weaken and diminish it, both in extent and degree. But when this is represented in the prophecy, then it is added, "and his kingdom was full of darkness, and they gnawed their tongues for pain." If we consider what is commonly intended by similar phrases in the scripture, I think we shall be naturally, and as it were necessarily, led to understand those words thus: Their policy, by which heretofore they have prevailed, shall now fail them; their authority shall be weakened, their dominion greatly diminished, and all their subtilty shall not avail them to support the throne of the beast, or even again to extend his authority so far as it had been before extended, and to recover what is lost. All their crafty devices to this end shall be attended with vexatious, tormenting disappointment; they who have the management of the beast's kingdom, shall henceforward grope as in the dark, and stumble, and be confounded in their purposes, plots and enterprises. Formerly their policy was greatly successful, as a light to guide them to their ends; but now their kingdom shall be full of darkness, and their wisdom shall fail them in all their devices to subdue the church of God.

The scripture takes notice of the great policy and subtilty of the powers that support this kingdom, Dan. vii. 8. "And behold, in this horn were eyes like the eyes of a man. So it is said of Antiochus Epiphanes, that great type of Antichrist, Dan. viii. 23. "A king of fierce countenance, and understanding dark sentences, shall stand up." Ver. 25. "And through his policy also, shall he cause craft to prosper in his hand." This understanding and policy is the light of this kingdom, as true wisdom is the light of the spiritual Jerusalem; and therefore, when the light fails, then may the kingdom of this spiritual Egypt be said to be full of darkness. God henceforward will defend his people from these mystical Egyptians, as he defended Israel of old from Pharaoh and his host, when pursuing after them, by placing a cloud and darkness in their way, and so not suffering them to come nigh. He will protect his church from the men of *that city that is spiritually called* Sodom, as Lot's house, wherein were the angels, was defended from the men of Sodom, by their being smitten with darkness or blindness, so that they wearied themselves to find the door; and as God defended the city in which was Elisha, the prophet and witness of the Lord, from the Syrians, when they compassed it about with

horses and chariots, and a great host to apprehend him, by smiting them with blindness. The scripture teaches us, that God is wont in this way to defend his church and people from their crafty and powerful enemies; Job v. 11, &c. "To set up on high those that be low, that those which mourn may be exalted to safety: He disappointeth the devices of the crafty, so that their hands cannot perform their enterprise: He taketh the wise in their own craftiness, and the counsel of the froward is carried headlong: They meet with darkness in the day time, and grope in the noon-day as in the night; but he saveth the poor from the sword, from their mouth, and from the hand of the mighty." (See also Psal. xxxv. 4, 6.) On account of such defence of God's protestant church, with the disappointment and confusion of all the subtile devices, deep-laid schemes, and furious attempts of their antichristian enemies, to root them out, while they see them still maintaining their ground, in spite of all they do, it makes them as it were gnash their teeth, and bite their tongues for mere rage and vexation; agreeably to Psal. cxxii. 9, 10. "His righteousness endureth for ever, his horn shall be exalted with honour: The wicked shall see it and be grieved, and gnash with his teeth and melt away: The desire of the wicked shall perish."

Hitherto this prophecy has been very signally fulfilled; since the reformation, the kingdom of Antichrist has been remarkably filled with darkness in this respect. Innumerable have been the crafty devices, and great attempts of the church of Rome, wherein they have exerted their utmost policy and power, to recover their lost dominions, and again to subjugate the Protestant nations—the *northern heresy*, as they call it. They have wearied themselves in these endeavours for more than *two hundred* years past; but have hitherto been disappointed, and have often been strangely confounded. When their matters seemed to be brought to a degree of ripeness, and they triumphed as though their point was gained, their joy and triumph have suddenly turned into vexation and torment. How many have been their politic and powerful attempts against the Protestant interest in our nation in particular? And how wonderfully has God disappointed them from time to time! And as God has hitherto so remarkably fulfilled his word in defending his protestant church from antichrist, so I think we have ground to trust in him, that he will defend it to the end.

5. The *hypothesis* of those who suppose that the slaying of the witnesses yet remains to be fulfilled, makes the prophecies of the *Revelation* to be *inconsistent* one with another. According to their *hypothesis*, that battle (Rev. xi. 7.) wherein the beast makes war with the witnesses, overcomes, and kills them, is the last and greatest conflict between antichrist and the church of Christ, which is to precede the utter overthrow of

the antichristian kingdom. And they must suppose so; for they suppose that immediately after the sufferings the church shall endure in that war, she shall arise, and as it were ascend into heaven; i. e. as they interpret it, the church shall be directly advanced to her latter-day rest, prosperity and glory. And consequently, this conflict must be the same with that great battle between antichrist and the church, described chap. xvi. 13. to the end, and more largely chap. xix. 11. to the end. For that which is described in these places, is most indisputably the greatest and last conflict between the church and her antichristian enemies; on which the utter downfall of antichrist, and the church's advancement to her latter-day glory, shall be immediately consequent. And so the earthquake that attends the resurrection of the witnesses, chap. xi. 13, must be the same with that great earthquake described, chap. xvi. 18. And the falling of the tenth part of the city must be the same with that terrible and utter destruction of antichrist's kingdom, chap. xvi. 17, to the end.

But these things cannot be. The battle, chap. xi. 7, cannot be the same with that last and great battle between the church and antichrist, described, chap. xvi. and xix. For the things that are said of one and the other, and their issue, are in no wise consistent. In that battle, chap. xi. the church of God conflicts with her enemies in sorrow, sackcloth, and blood: but in the other the matter is represented exceedingly otherwise; the church goes forth to fight with antichrist, not in sackcloth and blood, but clothed in white raiment, Christ himself before them, as their captain, going forth in great pomp and magnificence, upon a *white horse*, and *on his head many* crowns, and on his vesture, and on his thigh a name written, *King of kings and Lord of lords.* And the saints who follow so glorious a leader to this great battle, follow him on "white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean," in garments of strength, joy, glory and triumph; in the same kind of raiment, that the saints appear in, when they are represented as triumphing with Christ, with palms in their hands, chap. vii. 9. And the issue of the latter of these conflicts, is quite the reverse of the former. In the battle, chap. xi. 7. "The beast makes war with the witnesses, and *overcomes them and kills them*:" the same is foretold, Dan. vii. 21. "I beheld, and the same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them." And Rev. xii. 7. "And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them." But in the issue of that last and great battle, which the church shall have with her anti-christian enemies, the church shall *overcome them and kill them*; Rev. xvii. 14. "These shall make war with the lamb, and the lamb shall overcome them; for he is Lord of lords,

and King of kings; and they that are with him, are called and chosen and faithful.*

In the conflict that the beasts shall have with the witnesses, the *beast kills them, and their dead bodies lie unburied;* as though they were to be meat for the beasts of the earth, and fowls of heaven: but in that last battle, it is represented that christ and his church "shall slay their enemies, and give their dead bodies to be meat for the fowls of heaven." (Chap. xix 17, &c.) There is no appearance, in the descriptions given of that last great battle, of any advantages gained in it by the enemies of the church, before they themselves are overcome; but all appearance of the contrary. The descriptions in the xvi. and xix. chapters of the Revelation will by no means allow of such an advantage, as overcoming God's people, and slaying them; their lying dead for some time, and unburied, that their dead bodies may be for their enemies to abuse, trample on, and make sport with. In chap. xvi. we read of their being gathered together against the church, a mighty host, into the place called Armageddon; and then the first thing we hear of, is, the pouring out of the seventh vial of God's wrath, and a voice saying, "it is done." And so in the xix. chap. we have an account of the "beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, being gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army." And then the next thing we hear of, is, that the "beast is taken, and with him the false prophet: and that these are both cast alive into the lake of fire; and that the remnant of their vast army are slain, and all the fowls filled with their flesh." The issue of the conflict of the beast with the witnesses, in the triumph of the church's enemies over God's people, looking on them as entirely vanquished, and their interest utterly ruined, past all recovery; "they that dwell on the earth shall see the dead bodies of the saints lying in the streets of the great city, and shall rejoice over them,and make merry,and send gifts one to another." But the issue of that great and last battle is quite the reverse; it is the church's triumph over her enemies, as being utterly and for ever destroyed.†

* Compared with Chap. xix. 16, and following verses, and Chap. xvi. 16, 17.

† Here if any one shall say, that the ascension of the witnesses into heaven in the sight of their enemies, may, as has more generally been supposed, signify the church's last victory and triumph over her antichristian enemies, and final deliverance from them—and yet the battle between antichrist and the witnesses, spoken of, Rev. xi. 7. wherein the witnesses are slain, may not be the same with that last and greatest battle between antichrist and the church, chap. xvi. and xix. which immediately precedes and issues in the church's final victory and deliverance—they will say that which the prophecies give no reason, nor allow any room to suppose. That last battle between the church and antichrist wherein Christ and his people obtain a complete victory, is evidently one of the greatest and most remarkable events foretold in all the *Apocalypse:* and there is no one thing, unless it be the consummation of all things, in the two last chapters, that is described in so

Upon the whole, I think there appears to be no reason from the prophecy concerning the *two witnesses*, Rev. xi. to expect

solemn and august a manner. And the description shews that it is an event which with its circumstances must take up much time. There is vast preparation made for it by the church's enemies: the devils in order to stir men up, and gather them together, to this *battle of that great day of God Almighty, go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world*, to propagate various kinds of delusions, far and wide all over the world; which undoubtedly, must take up many years' time; chap. xvi. 13, 14. And then great preparation is made in the church of God, to make opposition; chap. xix. 11—17. Now can any reasonably suppose, in what is represented, chap. xi. of a great conflict between antichrist and God's people—wherein the latter are overcome and slain, lie dead three days (or three years) and a half, their enemies triumphing over them; but yet, rising again from the dead in the midst of this triumph of their enemies, and ascending into heaven, while the enemies stand astonished and amazed spectators—that before they ascend they continue long to encounter with antichrist in a new conflict? For, is it not plain that herein their enemies, after long time to prepare, should engage with them with vastly greater preparations, strength and violence than before, and should wage war with them with the mightiest army that ever was gathered against the church, and in the greatest battle that ever was fought?

Besides the witnesses ascending into heaven in the sight of their enemies, spoken of chap. xi. cannot be the same with the church's gaining a glorious ascendant over her enemies, in her final victory over antichrist, spoken of chap. xvi. xix. because the descriptions of the events by no means answer each other. For, observe, it is said that when the witnesses *arose, and stood on their feet, and ascended into heaven, the same hour there was a great earthquake;* but this does not seem to answer to what it described, chap. xvi. 18. *And there were voices, and thunders, and lightnings, and there was a great earthquake, such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake and so great.* It is said, that, at the time of the *first* earthquake, (chap. xi. 13.) "The tenth part of the city fell:" but how far does this fall short of what is described, as attending the *great* earthquake? (chap. xv. 19, 20.) "And the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell; and great Babylon came into remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath; and every island fled away, and the mountains were not found." It is said of the earthquake, chap. xi. "And in the earthquake were slain of men seven thousand:" but how far is this from answering the slaughter described, chap. xix. 17, &c.? For that is represented as a general slaughter of the kings, captains, mighty men, horses and armies of the earth, and of the whole world: so that all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven, as far as the sun shines, are filled with the flesh of the dead carcasses, it being the "flesh of all men, both free and bond, both small and great." (Compare chap. xvi. 14.) Who can think that this great slaughter thus represented, should in chap. xi. be only called a "slaying seven thousand men?"

If we read this very eleventh chapter through, we shall see that the falling of the tenth part of the city, and the witnesses arising and ascending into heaven, are entirely distinct from the final destruction of antichrist, and that advancement of the church to her latter day glory, that is consequent upon it. The judgments here spoken of, as executed on God's enemies, are under another *woe;* and the benefits bestowed on the church are under another *trumpet*. For immediately after the account of the rising and ascending of the witnesses, the tenth part of the city falling, and the slaying of the seven thousand men, the affrighting of the rest, and their giving glory to the God of heaven, follow these words (ver. 14, 15.) "The second woe is past; and behold the third woe cometh quickly. And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, the kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign for ever and ever." And in the following verses we have an account of the praises sung to God on this occasion. And then in that last verse, we have a brief hint of that same earthquake, the great hail, and those thunders, lightnings and voices that we have an account of in the latter part of chap. xvi. So that the earthquake mentioned in the last verse of chap. xi. is that great earthquake that attends the last great conflict of the church and her enemies; and not that mentioned ver. 13.

any such general and terrible destruction of the church of Christ, before the utter downfall of antichrist, as some have supposed;

The three woes, are the woes of God on antichrist and his subjects; and the last of them evidently signifies the terrible judgments of God on antichrist, by which God's wrath upon him shall be fulfilled in his utter destruction. But the calamities on antichrist, attending the rising and ascending of the witnesses—such as the falling of the tenth part of the city and slaying seven thousand men—do not belong to this *last woe*, and therefore do not signify the final destruction of antichrist. For the words of ver. 14, will by no means allow of such a supposition; for there, immediately after giving an account of these calamities, it is added, "the second woe is past; and behold the third woe cometh quickly:" making a most plain and express distinction between the calamities which had already been just mentioned, and those which belong to the *third woe*, that yet remains to be mentioned. For by being *passed*, the prophet is to be understood no otherwise, than passed in the declaration and representation; as much as to say, thus an account has been given of the calamities upon antichrist that belong to the *second* woe; now I proceed to give an account of those dispensations of providence that belong to the *third* and last woe, which shall prove antichrist's final destruction, and end in the kingdoms of this world becoming the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ.

What was fufilled in the Reformation, well answers the representation made concerning the witnesses. Rev. xi. 11, 12. "Of the spirit of life from God entering into them, and their standing on their feet, and ascending up to heaven in the sight of their enemies. A little before the reformation, the state of the church of God and of true religion, was lowest of all, and nearest to utter extinction.—Antichrist had, after great and long struggles, prevailed against the Waldenses, Albigenses, and Bohemians. The war with the Albigenses seems especially to be intended by the war of the beast with the witnesses spoken of ver. 7. These witnesses to the truth, were the most numerous and considerable, and were those that most tormented the church of Rome. And the war that was maintained against them, was by far the greatest that ever antichrist had against any of the professors of the truth before the reformation; and was properly the war of the beast. It was the Pope that proclaimed the war, that raised the soldiers by his emissaries and priests, preaching the cross, gathering innumerable multitudes of pilgrims from all parts of Christendom, and raising one Croisade after another, which were conducted and managed by the Pope's legates. It was the Pope that paid the soldiers with pardons, indulgences, promises of paradise, and such like trumpery. When antichrist had gradually prevailed against these witnesses, with much difficulty and long continued violent struggling, and after innumerable vexations, disasters, and disappointments, the church of God, in the time of Luther and other reformers, revives on a sudden, in a wonderful manner, when such an event was least expected, to the surprise and amazement of their antichristian enemies, and appears in such strength, that the reformed are able to stand on their own legs, and to withstand all the power and rage of the church of Rome. Presently after this revival, the people of God are set on high, having the civil magistrate in many countries on their side, and henceforward have the power of many potent princes engaged for their protection. And this, in sight of their enemies, and greatly to their grief and vexation: who, though from time to time they exert their utmost, never are able to prevail against them any more, as they had done in former wars. Oftentimes in scripture, God's church dwelling in safety, out of the reach of their enemies, is represented by their dwelling on high, or being set on high, as Psalm lix. 1. lxix. 29. xci. 14. cvii. 41. Prov. xxix. 25. Isai. xxxiii. 16. The children of Israel, in their deliverance out of Egypt from their cruel task-masters, who would fain have brought them into bondage again, were said to be carried on eagle's wings, which flies away towards heaven; so that the Egyptians could not come at them; and they were protected by the cloud that went with them; as the witnesses are said to be caught up to heaven in a cloud. Compare this with Isai. iv. 5. "And the Lord will create upon every dwelling-place of mount Zion, and upon her assemblies, a cloud and smoke by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night; for upon all the glory shall be a defence."

but good reason to determine the contrary. It is true, there is abundant evidence in scripture, that there is yet remaining a

I shall not pretend to explain the mystery of *the three days and a half* of the witnesses lying dead, or to determine the precise duration signified by that mystical representation. Possibly no particular measure of time may be intended by it; and yet it may not be without significancy.* As no *particular* number of persons is intended by the *two* witnesses, but in general it intends a *small*, yet a *sufficient* number—for less than *two* witnesses was not sufficient—so, perhaps, no particular duration of that low state of the church before the reformation, may be intended by three days and a half. But in general it may be hereby signified, that this time of the triumphing of the wicked, and extremity of God's church, should be but *short*. Possibly three days and a half may be mentioned, because that is the utmost space of time that a dead body can be ordinarily supposed to lie without putrefaction; signifying that at this time the church should be brought to the very brink of utter ruin, yet should be preserved, and made to revive again. And *half* a day may be mentioned to signify the particular care of Providence in exactly determining this time of his church's extremity. And probably there may be some reference to the three times (or three years) and an half of the witnesses prophesying in sackcloth; the more apparently to shew the disproportion between the time of the church's welfare, and the time of her enemies' victory and triumph. The time of the church's affliction and conflict may be long, and in the issue she may be overcome; but the time of this victory shall be but short in comparison with the other, but as a day to a year. She may as it were be killed, and lie dead, till she comes to the very brink of utter and hopeless ruin; yet God will not suffer her to see corruption. But at that very time when her enemies expected that she should putrefy, she shall arise; and be set on high, out of their reach, greatly to their astonishment.

The grand objection against all this, is, that it is said, "The witnesses should prophecy twelve hundred and sixty days clothed in sackcloth; and when they have finished their testimony, the beast should make war against them, and kill them," &c. And it seems manifest, that after this they are no longer in sackcloth; for henceforward they are in an exalted state in heaven: therefore, seeing the time of their wearing sackcloth, is *twelve hundred and sixty* days, which is the time of the continuance of antichrist; hence their being slain and rising again, must be at the conclusion of this period, and so at the end of antichrist's reign.

In answer to which I would say, that we can justly infer no more from this prophecy than this, viz. That the *twelve hundred and sixty* days is the *proper time* of the church's trouble and bondage, or being clothed in sackcloth; because it is the *appointed time* of the reign of antichrist. But this does not hinder, but that God, out of his great compassion to his church, should in some respect shorten the days, and grant that she should in some measure, *anticipate* the appointed great deliverance that should be at the end of those days. This he has in fact done at the reformation; whereby the church has had a great degree of restoration granted, from the darkness and power of antichrist, before her proper time, which is at the end of the *twelve hundred and sixty* days. Thus the church of Christ through the tender mercies of her Father and Redeemer, in some respects *anticipates* her deliverance from her sorrows and sackcloth: as many parts of the church are hereby brought from under the dominion of the antichristian powers, into a state of power and liberty; though in other respects the church may be said to continue in sackcloth, and in the wilderness, till the end of the days; many parts of it still remaining under grievous persecution.

What we render, "When they shall have finished their testimony," Mr. LOWMAN, (from Mr. DAUBUZ) renders "While they shall perform their testimo-

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* Mr. LOWMAN, in the preface to his paraphrase on the Revelation, page 8, observes as follows: "Prophetic numbers do not always express a determinate duration or space of time, any more than they always express a certain number. Prophecy, I acknowledge, uses numbers sometimes as other expressions, in a figurative meaning, as symbols and hieroglyphics. Thus the number *seven*, sometimes does not denote the precise number seven: but figuratively denotes perfection, or a full and complete number: and the number *ten*, sometimes does not mean precisely ten in number, but many in general, or a considerable number."

mighty conflict between the church and her enemies—the most violent struggle of Satan and his adherents in opposition to true religion, and the most general commotion that ever was in the world, since the foundation of it to that time—and many particular christians may suffer hard things in this conflict. But in the general, Satan and Antichrist shall not get the victory, nor greatly prevail; on the contrary, they shall be entirely conquered, and utterly overthrown in this great battle. So that I hope this prophecy of the *slaying of the witnesses*, will not stand in the way of a compliance with the proposal made to us in the *memorial*, as a prevalent objection and discouragement.

SECT. IV.

That the fall of Antichrist is at a great distance, answered.

A late very learned and ingenious expositor of the *Revelation*, Mr. LOWMAN, sets the fall of *antichrist*, and consequently the coming of Christ's kingdom, at a *great distance*; supposing that the *twelve hundred and sixty* years of antichrist's reign did not begin till the year *seven hundred and fifty-six;* and consequently, that it will not end till after the year *two thousand;* and this opinion he confirms by a great variety of arguments.

If this objection be allowed to be valid, and that which ought to determine persons in an affair of this nature, in connection with the duty before proved, then the following things must be supposed; viz. That it is the will of God his people

ny:" and observes, that the original may mean the *time* of their testimony as well as the *end* of it.—I might here observe, that we have other instances of God shortening the days of his church's captivity and bondage, either at the *beginning* or *end*, very parallel with what has been now supposed in the case of the witnesses. Thus the proper time of predicted bondage to the posterity of Abraham in Egypt, was *four hundred* years; Gen. xv. 13. But yet God in mercy *deferred* the *beginning* of their bondage; whereby the time was much shortened. So the time wherein it was foretold, that the whole land of Israel should be a desolation and an astonishment, and the land should enjoy her sabbaths, by the Babylonish captivity, was seventy years; (Jer. xxv. 11, 12.) and these seventy years are dated (2 Chron. xxxvi 20, 21.) from Zedekiah's captivity; and yet, from that captivity to Cyrus's decree, was but *fifty-two* years; though it was indeed *seventy* years before the more full restoration of the Jewish church and state by Darius's decree, Ezra vi. So the proper time of the oppression and bondage of the Jewish church under Antiochus Epiphanes, wherein "both the sanctuary and hosts should be trodden under foot by him, was two thousand three hundred days;" Dan. viii. 13, 14. The time from Antiochus's taking Jerusalem, and polluting the sanctuary, to his death, seems to have been about so long. But God shortened the days, by granting remarkable help to his people by means of the Maccabees, *before* that time. Yea, the temple and sanctuary were restored, and the altar rebuilt, and dedicated, before that period.

be much in prayer for this event; and particularly, that a little before its accomplishment his people be earnestly seeking, and importunately crying to God for it; but yet that it was God's design, before this time of extraordinary prayer and importunity, his church should understand precisely when the appointed time should be; and that accordingly he has now actually brought the fixed time to light, by means of Mr. Lowman. But is it reasonable to suppose, that this should be God's manner of dealing with his church; first to make known to them the precise time which he has unalterably fixed for shewing this mercy to Zion, and then make it the duty of his church, in an extraordinary manner, to be by prayer enquiring of him concerning it, and saying, *How long, Lord!* that he would come quickly, hide himself no longer, have mercy upon Zion, awake as one out of sleep, openly manifest himself, and make bare his holy arm for the salvation of his people? That "they who make mention of the Lord should not keep silence, nor give him any rest, till he establish and make Jerusalem a praise in the earth?" And that the church should then say to Christ, "Make haste, my beloved, and be thou like a roe or a young hart on the mountain of spices?"

It may be many ways for the comfort and benefit of God's church in her afflicted state, to know that the reign of antichrist is to be no more than one thousand two hundred and sixty years; and some things in general may be argued concerning the approach of it, when it is near: as the Jews could argue the approach of Christ's first coming, from Daniel's prophecy of the seventy weeks, though they knew not precisely when that seventy weeks would end. But it is not reasonable to expect that God should make known to us beforehand, the *precise* time of Christ's coming in his kingdom. The disciples desired to know this, and manifested their desire to their Lord; but he told them plainly, that "it was not for them to know the times and seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power;" (Acts i. 6, 7.) and there is no reason to think that it is any more for us than for them; or for Christ's disciples in these days any more than for his apostles in those days. God makes it the duty of his church to be importunately praying for it, and praying that it may come *speedily;* and not only to be praying for it, but to be seeking for it, in the use of proper means; endeavouring that religion may now revive every where, and Satan's kingdom be overthrown; and always to be waiting for it, being in a constant preparation for it, as servants that wait for the coming of their Lord, or virgins for the coming of the bridegroom, not knowing at what hour he will come. But God's making known beforehand the precise time of his coming, does not well consist with these things.

It is the revealed will of God, that he should be enquired of by his people, by extraordinary prayer, concerning this great mercy, to do it for them, before it be fulfilled. And if any suppose, that it is now found out precisely when the time is to be, and (the time being at a considerable distance) that now is not a proper season to begin this extraordinary prayer, I would on this supposition, ask, When we shall begin? How long before the fixed and known time of the bestowment of this mercy comes, shall we begin to cry earnestly to God that this mercy may come, and that Christ would make haste and be like a roe, &c.? For us to delay, supposing that we know the time to be far off, is not agreeable to the language of God's people in my text, "Come let us go *speedily*, and pray before the Lord, and seek the Lord of hosts."

I acknowledge that Mr. Lowman's Exposition of the *Revelation* is on many accounts excellently written, giving great light into some parts of that prophecy; and especially his interpretation of the five first vials: yet his opinion with respect to the *time*, *times*, and *half* a time of antichrist's reign, is the less to be regarded, because it is expressly declared it should be sealed up and hid, and not known till *the time of the end* of this period. Daniel, in the last chapter of his prophecy, gives us an account how the angel told him of a future time of great trouble and affliction to the church of God, and then said to him, ver. 4. "But thou, O Daniel, *shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end.*" And then the prophet proceeds to give an account of a vision he had of one earnestly enquiring of the angel of the Lord "how long it would be to the end" of this remarkable time of the church's trouble, saying, "How long shall it be to the end of these wonders?" ver. 5, 6. The answer was, that "it should be for a time, times and an half," and that when so long a time was past, then this wonderful affliction and scattering of the holy people should be finished, ver. 7. But then Daniel tells us, in the next verse, that "he heard, but he understood not," and said, "O, my Lord, what shall be the end of these things?" He did not understand that general and mystical answer, that those things should have an end at the end of "a time, times and an half;" he did not know by it, when this period would have an end, and therefore he enquires more particularly what the time of the end was. But the angel replies, ver. 9. "Go thy way, Daniel, the words are closed and sealed up, till the time of the end." I do not know what could have been more express. The angel gently rebukes this over inquisitiveness of Daniel, very much as Christ did a like inquisitiveness of the disciples concerning the same matter, where he said to them, "It is not for you to know the times and seasons, that the Father hath put in his own power."

I think there can be no doubt but that this space of the church's great trouble, about the end of which Daniel enquires, is the same with what is spoken of, chap vii. 25, and Rev. xii. 14, as the time of antichrist's reign, and the church's being in the wilderness; and not merely the time of the church's troubles by Antiochus Epiphanes. But we see, when Daniel has a mind to know particularly when this time would come to an end, he is bid to go away, and rest contented in ignorance of this matter: for, says the man clothed in linen, "*the words are closed up, and sealed, till the time of the end.*" That is, very plainly, the matter that you enquire about shall not be known, but be kept a great secret, till the time of the end actually comes, and all attempts to find it out before shall be in vain. And therefore when a particular divine appears, who thinks he has found it out, and has unsealed this matter, we may well think he is mistaken*.

Though it is not for us to know the precise time of the fall of antichrist, yet I humbly conceive that we have no reason to suppose the event principally intended in the prophecies of antichrist's destruction to be at so great a *distance* as Mr. Lowman places it; but have reason to think it to be much nearer. Not that I would set up myself as a person of equal judgment with Mr. Lowman in matters of this nature. As he differs from most other approved expositors of the Apocalypse, in this matter; so I hope it will not appear vanity and presumption in me to differ from this particular expositor, and to agree with the greater number. And since his opinion stands so much in the way of that great and important affair, to promote which is the very end of this whole discourse, I hope it will not look as though I affected to appear considerable among the interpreters of prophecy, and as a person of skill in these

* Mr. Lowman's own words in his preface, p. 24, 25, are here worthy to be repeated: "It will (says he) ever be a point of wisdom not to be over busy, or over confident in any thing, especially in fixing periods of time, or determining seasons; which it may be are not to be determined, it may be are not fit to be known. It is a maxim of greater wisdom than is usually thought, 'Seek not to know what should not be revealed.' Such are many future events. The precise time of our Saviour's coming to judgment was not revealed, because not fit to be revealed. The uncertainty of his appearance was of greater service to preserve a care of religion, than the revelation of it would have been; for the uncertainty itself gives many useful exhortations: 'Watch, for ye know not what hour the Son of man cometh.' Suppose then some of the events described in this prophecy should be of doubtful application—suppose the precise time of the downfall of the beast, the slaying and resurrection of the witnesses, and the beginning of the thousand years' happy state of the church, should not be so determined, but it would admit of different calculations; may it not be wise, and therefore fit it should be so? The certainty of those events in a proper time, though that time should not be precisely determined, will answer the greater ends of useful instruction. And if the revelation should go no further than this, it would yet be a revelation of great benefit and advantage; as the certainty of the day of judgment in its proper time surely is, though of that day and hour knoweth no man."

mysterious matters, when I offer some reasons against Mr. Lowman's opinion. It is surely great pity, that it should be received as a thing clear and abundantly confirmed, that the glorious day of antichrist's fall is at so great a distance, so directly tending to discourage all earnest endeavours after its speedy accomplishment (unless there be good and plain ground for it.) I would therefore offer some things to consideration, which I think may justly make us look upon the opinion of this learned interpreter, not so indubitable, as to hinder our praying and hoping for its being fulfilled much sooner.

The period of antichrist's reign, as this author has fixed it, seems to be the main point insisted on in his exposition of the revelation; which he supposes a great many things in the scheme of prophecies delivered in that book concur to establish. But there are several things in that scheme which appear to me justly liable to exception.

Whereas it is represented, Rev. xvii. 10, 11, that there are seven different successive heads of the beast; that five were past, and another was to come, and to continue a short space, that might on some accounts be reckoned a seventh; and that antichrist was to follow next after this, as the eighth; but yet the foregoing not being properly one of the heads of the beast, he was properly the seventh. Mr. Lowman does not think with others, that by the seventh that was to continue a short space, which would not be properly one of the heads of the beast, is meant Constantine, and the other christian emperors; for he thinks they are reckoned as properly belonging to the sixth head of the beast, but that hereby is intended the government of Rome under the Gothic princes, and the exarchate of Ravenna, after the imperial form of government in Rome ceased in Augustulus, till the Pope was invested with his temporal dominion, called St. Peter's patrimony by Pepin king of France, in the year 756. And he supposes that the wounding of one of the heads of the beast with a sword of death, ch. xiii. 3—14, was not fulfilled in the destruction of the heathen empire, and the giving of the imperial power unto christians, but in the destruction of the imperial form of government by the sword of the Goths, in the time of Augustulus. But it seems to me to be very unlikely, that the spirit of God should reckon Constantine and the christian emperors as proper members, and belonging to one of the heads of that monstrous wild and cruel beast, compared to a leopard, a bear, and a devouring lion, that had a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies, and that rules by the power and authority of the dragon, or the devil;* which beast is represented in this

* The word *Therion*, signifies a wild savage beast, as Mr. Lowman himself observes, page 187.

17th chapter, as full of names of blasphemy, and of a bloody colour, denoting his cruelty in persecuting the christian church. For Constantine, instead of this, was a member of the christian church, set by God in the most eminent station in his church; and was honoured, above all other princes that ever had been in the world, as the great protector of his church, and her deliverer from the persecuting power of that cruel scarlet-coloured beast. Mr. Lowman himself styles him "a christian prince, and protector of the christian religion." God is very careful not to reckon his own people among the Gentiles, the visible subjects of Satan, Numb. xxiii. 9. "The people shall not be reckoned among the nations." If they happen to be among them, he will be careful to set a mark upon them, as a note of distinction; Rev. vii. 3, &c. when God is reckoning up his own people, he leaves out those that have been noted for idolatry. As among the tribes that were sealed, Rev. viii. those idolatrous tribes of Ephraim and Dan are left out, and in the genealogy of Christ, Matt. i. those princes that were chiefly noted for idolatry, are left out. Much more would God be careful not to reckon his own people, especially such christian princes as have been the most eminent instruments of overthrowing idolatry, amongst idolaters; and as members and heads of that kingdom that is noted in scripture as the most notorious and infamous of all, for abominable idolatry, opposition and cruelty to the true worshippers of God. And especially not to reckon them as properly belonging to one of those seven heads of this monarchy, of which very heads it is particularly noted that they had on them the names of *blasphemy*: (Rev. xiii. 1.) which Mr. Lowman himself supposes to signify *idolatry*.

It was therefore worthy of God, agreeable to his manner, and might well be expected, that when he was reckoning up the several successive heads of this beast, and Constantine and his successors came in the way, and there was occasion to mention them, to set a mark, or note of distinction on them, signifying that they did not properly belong to the beast, nor were to be reckoned as belonging to the heads; and therefore are to be skipped over in the reckoning; and antichrist, though the eighth head of the Roman empire, is to be reckoned the seventh head of the beast. This appears to me abundantly the most just and natural interpretation of Rev. xvii. 10, 11. It is reasonable to suppose, that God would take care to make such a note in this prophetical description of this dreadful beast, and not by any means to reckon Constantine as belonging properly to him.—If we reckon Constantine as a member of this beast having seven heads and ten horns, described chap. xvii. and as properly one of his heads, then he was also properly a member of the great red dragon

with seven heads and ten horns, that warred with the woman, chap. xii.—For the seven heads and ten horns of that dragon, are plainly the same with the seven heads and ten horns of the beast. So that this makes Constantine a visible member of the devil; for we are told expressly of that dragon, ver. 9, that he was "that old serpent, called the Devil and Satan." And to suppose that Constantine is reckoned as belonging to one of the heads of that dragon, is to make these prophecies inconsistent with themselves. For in the 12th chapter, we have represented a war between the dragon and the woman clothed with the sun; which woman, as all agree, is the church; but Constantine, as all do also agree, belonged to the woman, was a member of the christian church, and was on that side in the war against the dragon; yea, was the main instrument of that great victory obtained over the dragon, (ver. 9—12.) What an inconsistency therefore is it, to suppose that he was at the same time a member and head of that very dragon, which fought with the woman, and yet which Constantine himself fought with, overcame, and gloriously triumphed over? It is not therefore to be wondered at, that God was careful to distinguish Constantine from the proper heads of the beast: it would have been a wonder if he had not. God seems to have been careful to *distinguish* him, not only in his word, but in his *Providence*, by so ordering it that this christian emperor should be removed from Rome, the city which God had given up to the seat of the power of the beast and of its heads, and that he should have the seat of his empire elsewhere.

Constantine was the instrument of giving a mortal wound to the heathen Roman empire; and giving it a mortal wound in its *head*, viz. the heathen emperors then reigning, Maxentius and Licinius. But more eminently was this glorious change in the empire owing to the power of God's word, the prevalence of the glorious gospel, by which Constantine himself was converted, and so became the instrument of the overthrow of the heathen empire in the east and west. The change that was then brought to pass, is represented as the destruction of the heathen empire, or the old heathen world; and therefore seems to be compared to that dissolution of heaven and earth that shall be at the day of judgment. (Rev. vi. 12, &c.) And therefore well might the heathen empire under the head which was then reigning, be represented as wounded to death, (chap. xiii. 3.) It is much more likely, that the wound the beast had by a sword in his head, (ver. 14.) was the wound the heathen empire had in its head by that sword which (chap. i. 16. and xix. 15.) proceeds out of the mouth of Christ, than the wound that was given to the christian empire and emperor by the sword of the heathen Goths. It is most likely that this deadly wound was by that sword with which Michael made war

with him, and overcame him, and cast him to the earth, (chap. xii. 9.) and that the deadly wound was given him at that very time. It is most likely, that the sword which gave him this deadly wound, after which he strangely revived, as though he rose from the dead, was the same sword with that which shall at last utterly destroy him, so that he shall never rise more, (chap. xix. 15, 19, 20, 21.) This wounding of the head of the beast by the destruction of the heathen empire and conversion of the emperor to the christian truth, was a glorious event indeed of divine Providence, worthy to be so much spoken of in prophecy.—It is natural to suppose, that the mortal wounding of the head of that savage cruel beast, represented as constantly at war with the woman, and persecuting the church of Christ, should be some relief to the christian church; but on the contrary, that wounding to death, that Mr. Lowman speaks of, was the victory of the enemies of the christian church *over her*, and the wound received *from them*.

It is said of that head of the empire that shall be next after the sixth head, and next before antichrist, and that is not reckoned as properly one of the number of the heads of the beast, that "when it comes, it shall continue a short space," chap. xvii. 10. By which we may understand, at least, that it shall be one of the shortest, in its continuance, of the successive heads. But the government seated at Ravenna, in the hands of the Goths, or of the deputies of the Greek emperors, (which Mr. Lowman supposes to be meant by the head, continued, as Mr. Lowman himself takes notice, very near three hundred years. And if so, its continuance was one of the longest of the heads mentioned.

Besides, if the government Rome was under, from the time that Augustulus abdicated to the time when the Pope was confirmed in his temporal dominion, was meant by the seventh head that was to be between the imperial head and the papal, there would doubtless have been two different heads mentioned, instead of one, between the Emperor and the Pope; viz. First, the Gothic princes, who reigned near one hundred years. Secondly, the Exarchs of Ravenna, who governed for about one hundred and eighty-five years. The Gothic kingdom was much more properly a distinct government from the Imperial, than the Exarchate of Ravenna. For during the Exarchate, Rome was under the government of the Emperor, as much as it was in Constantine's time.

In Rev. xvii. 12, it is said, the "ten horns are ten kings, which are to receive power as kings one hour with the beast," or (as Mr. Lowman says it ought to have been translated) "the same hour or point of time with the beast." This will not allow the time when antichrist first receives power as king, to

be so late as Mr. LOWMAN supposes. This division of the empire into many kingdoms, denoted by the number ten, was about the year four hundred and fifty-six, after Genesericus had taken the city of Rome: but Mr. LOWMAN places the beginning of the reign of antichrist in the year seven hundred and fifty-six, which is three hundred years later. I know, such an expression as *in one hour*, or *the same hour*, may allow of some latitude: but surely not such a latitude as this. This is a much longer time, than it was from the time of the vision to Constantine; much longer than the space of all the first six seals; longer than it was from Christ's ascension to Constantine; and near as long as thetime of all the reigns of the heathen Emperors put together, from Augustus Cæsar to Constantine. An hour is every where else in this book, used to signify a very short time: as may be seen in places cited in the margin*. And the expression, *The same hour*, every where else in the bible, intends near the same point of time†. The phrase *one hour* is used several times in the next chapter, speaking of the downfall of antichrist:‡ and in each evidently signifies *a very short space of time*. And there is no reason why we should not understand the same phrase in the same sense, when used here concerning the rise of antichrist.§

* Rev. xviii. 10, 17, 19. Chap. iii. 3—iii. 10.—viii. 1.—ix. 15.—xiv. 7.

† Dan. iii. 6.— iv. 33.—v. 5. Matth. viii. 13. x. 19. Luke vii. 21—xii. 12.—xx. 19.—xxiv. 33. John iv. 53. Acts xvi. 18, 33.—xxii. 13. Rev. xi. 13 ‡ Ver. 10, 17, 19.

§ Mr. LOWMAN greatly insists upon it, that what is spoken as continuing one thousand two hundred and sixty days, is not so much any spiritual authority or ecclesiastical power of the Pope over the nations of Christendom, as his temporal government and dominion in that individual city of Rome; and therefore to determine when these one thousand two hundred and sixty days or years began, and when they will end, we must consider when the Pope first received this his temporal power over the city of Rome, and the neighbouring regions, called St. *Peter's patrimony*. But I can see no good reason for this. Indeed it is strange if it be so. God has been pleased in the revelations and prophecies, which he has given for the benefit of his *church* in *general*, to speak much concerning an antichristian power that should *persecute the saints, and scatter the power of the holy people*, and be an occasion of great affliction *to the church of Christ;* and has declared often, that his dominion shall continue so long, and no longer; and for the comfort of his *church in general*, Christ hath sworn with great solemnity, that the continuance of this persecuting power shall be limited; Dan. xii 7 Now it would be strange, if in all this the thing principally intended is not that dominion of this antichristian power which chiefly concerns the church of Christ *in general*, but merely his *temporal* dominion over one province in *Italy*, called St. *Peter's patrimony*. Doubtless, that dominion of antichrist which the prophecies describe, is the dominion whose duration and limits those prophecies declare. But the dominion of antichrist which the prophecies describe, is not any dominion over a particular province in *Italy*, but the dominion by which he succeeds the four great *monarchies of the world;* (Dan. vii.) the dominion by which he *succeeds the dragon in his power, throne and great authority:* (Rev. xiii. 2.) the dominion in which he has *power given him over all kindreds, tongues, and nations;* (ver. 7.) the dominion by which *the great whore sits on many waters;* (chap. xvii. 1.) which the angel explains to be *peoples and multitudes and nations and tongues;* (ver. 15.) and the dominion in which he *reigns over the ten kings*, into which the Roman empire is

However, I do not deny that the time when Mr. LOWMAN supposes the reign of the beast began, even the time when

divided; (Rev. xiii 1. and xvii 3, 12, 13) The beast that *had ten horns*, is not the city of *Rome*, and the neighbouring region, but the *Roman* empire; they are the horns, or the kings, not of the *city*, but of the *empire*. If we consider what is expressed in the passages themselves, which speak of the three years and a half of antichrist, they will lead us to understand something very diverse from the duration of his *temporal* dominion over St. *Peter's patrimony*. In Dan. vii. 25 the time, times, and half, of the little horn, is expressly the continuance of time wherein *it shall be given to him to change times and laws and wear out the saints of the Most High*. and in chap. xii 7. it is spoken of as *the time of his scattering the power of the holy people*. In Rev xi. 2. the forty and two months is spoken of as the time of antichrist's *treading under foot the court of the temple and the holy city*; i. e. the external and visible christian church abroad in the world, or the nations of Christendom. In ver. 3. the one thousand two hundred and sixty days of antichrist are spoken of as the same time of the *witnesses prophesying in sackcloth*; and in chap. xii 6, and 14, the time of the *woman's being in the wilderness*, which was through the great power antichrist had over the christian world, and not his small temporal dominion in Italy.

It is true, some regard is had in the prophecies to the city of *Rome*, the city built on seven hills: which being the fountain of all rule and authority in the *Roman* monarchy, and the capital city of the empire, from whence the whole empire was denominated, and the place where the head of the empire usually resided, was properly used by the angel, (Rev. xvii. 9. 18.) to shew what empire antichrist should rule over, and what city he should usually reside in. And this is all that can be meant by the words of the angel; and not that those streets and walls, were such main and essential things in what the prophecy intended by the beast; that when antichrist's dominion ceases in *that place*, then the beast ceases. For, if so, then it will follow, that the beast had his head wounded to death a second time, and ceased to be, when the Popes resided at Avignon in France, for the best part of a century; when not only the Popes did not reside in Rome, nor in any part of St. *Peter's* patrimony, nor any part of Italy; but some of them were neither Romans nor Italians. Though the angel says of the great whore, Rev. xvii. 18. *The woman which thou sawest, is the great city which reigns over the kings of the earth*: yet by the city, in this case, is not meant so much what was contained within those *Roman* walls, as the *Roman empire*; as is evident by chap. xi. 8. *And their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the great city, which is spiritually called* Sodom *and* Egypt. Here, by that great city, neither Mr. LOWMAN himself, nor I suppose any other Protestant interpreter, understands the city of *Rome*, strictly speaking, but the *Roman* monarchy.

And though it be true, as Mr. LOWMAN observes, the Pope's ecclesiastical monarchy, power and influence through Christendom, was greatly established and advanced by Pepin making him a temporal prince over the Exarchate of Ravenna; yet, I would ask, whether the Pope's power and influence in the world, and his ability to disturb the quiet of the nations of Christendom, and (as expressed in Daniel,) *to change times and laws*, and to carry his own designs, in the various countries and kingdoms of Europe, was not greater *before Pepin*, than it is now, and has been for a long time? And yet Mr. LOWMAN supposes that *now* is properly the time of antichrist's reign, that the 1260 years of his reign continues, and will continue for about 270 years longer; though his power be now so small, and has been declining ever since the reformation, and still declines continually.

One thing, Mr. LOWMAN supposes, which confirms his opinion of so late a beginning of the 1260 years of the reign of the *beast*, is the order of the several *periods* of this prophecy, and the manner of their *succeeding* one another.

As to his particular scheme of the *seven periods*, so divided and limited, and so obviously ranked in such order, and following one another in such direct and continual *succession*, and each ending in a state of peace, safety and happiness to the church of God, it seems to me to be more ingenious than solid, and that many things might be said to demonstrate it not to be founded in the truth of things, and the real design of the divine author of this prophecy. But not to enter into a particular and full examination of it, I would now only observe, which directly concerns my present purpose, that to make out this scheme, Mr. LOWMAN suppo-

Pepin confirmed to the Pope his temporal dominions in Italy, was a time of the great increase and advancement of the power of antichrist in the world, and a notable *epoch*. And if I may be allowed humbly to offer what appears to me to be the truth with relation to the rise and fall of antichrist; it is this:—As the power of antichrist, and the corruption of the apostate church, rose *not at once*, but by SEVERAL NOTABLE STEPS and degrees: so it will IN THE LIKE MANNER FALL: and, that DIVERS STEPS, and SEASONS OF DESTRUCTION to the spiritual Babylon, and revival of the true church, are prophesied of under ONE. And yet it may be true, that there is some particular event, which prevails above all others in the intention of the prophecy, some remarkable season of the destruction of the church of Rome, the papal power and corruption, and advancement of true religion.*

ses that the fifth and sixth trumpets, that bring on the two first woes, and the whole 9th chapter of Revelation, altogether respects the Saracens. But it appears to me not very credible, that the Saracens should have so much said of them in this prophecy, as to have a whole chapter taken up about them, and not a word in the prophecy be said about the Turks, who immediately succeeded them in the same religion; who proceeded on the same principles, were so much more considerable, brought vastly greater calamities on the christian world, have set up and long maintained one of the greatest, strongest, and most extraordinary empires that ever the world saw, and have been the most terrible scourge to Christendom, that ever divine providence made use of, and one of the greatest of all God's plagues on the world of mankind. For though it be true, that the reign of Othman or Ottoman, who began what they call the Ottoman empire, was a long time after this, yet the Turks themselves, under other princes, in the government they set up in territories that had formerly been possessed by christians, and in their overrunning and ravaging christian countries, immediately succeeded the Saracens; and from thenceforward have been a terrible, and almost continual scourge to the church.

Mr. LOWMAN, in pursuance of his scheme, also supposes, which is yet more incredible, this period of the trumpets ends in *a state of safety, peace and happiness to the church of God*, so that, on that occasion, "there are great voices in heaven, saying, the kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ," chap. xi. 15.† And yet he supposes, that it issues in setting up the kingdom of antichrist; and that about that very time, when these heavenly voices so joyfully proclaimed this, the beast was enthroned, and the time, times, and half, or 1260 days of his reign began, which is spoken of every where as the time of the church's greatest darkness and trouble, the time wherein the "little horn should wear out the saints of the Most High," Dan. vii 25. "The time appointed for his scattering the power of the holy people," Dan xii. 7. "The time of the woman's being in the wilderness," Rev xii. 6, 14. "The time of treading under foot the court of the temple," chap xi. 2. And the "time of the witnesses prophesying in sackcloth," chap. xi. 3.

* It was certainly thus with regard to the prophecies of the destruction of old Babylon, and the church's deliverance from captivity and oppresion by that city and kingdom; which is abundantly alluded to in these prophecies of the Revelation, as a noted type of the oppression of the church of Christ by the church of Rome, calling the latter so often by the name of Babylon, and the church of Christ Jerusalem. The captivity of the Jews by the Babylonians was not perfected at once, but was brought on by several notable steps. So neither was the restoration of the Jewish church, after the captivity, perfected at once. It was several times foretold, that the duration of the captivity should be seventy years; and also, that

† Preface of his paraphrase, &c. p. 13, 14, and 16.

There are, as I apprehend, good reasons to hope, that the work of God's Holy Spirit which in its progress will over-

after seventy years were accomplished, God would destroy Babylon; (Jer. xxv. 11, 12, &c.) But this period had manifestly several different beginnings, and several endings. Thus from Jeboiakim's captivity to Cyrus's decree for the return of the Jews, and the re-building of Jerusalem, was seventy years. And from Zedekiah's captivity to Darius's decree (Ezra vi.) seventy years. And from the last carrying away of all, (Jer. lii. 30) to the finishing and dedication of the temple, was also seventy years. So also the prophecies of Babylon's destruction were fulfilled by several steps. These prophecies seem to have a principal respect to that destruction that was accomplished by Cyrus, at the end of the first seventy years forementioned. But there were other things in the very same prophecies not fulfilled till the fourth year of Darius; when what remained of Babylon was subject to another dreadful destruction. This in a great measure completed its desolation; which was at the end of the second seventy years, and when the restoration of the Jews was perfected by the decree of Darius.* But yet, there were many other things contained in the same prophecies of Babylon's destruction—rendering it thenceforward perfectly and perpetually desolate, and the haunt of serpents and wild beasts—that were not fulfilled till more than 200 years after, in the time of Seleucus king of Syria.† So also it was with respect to the prophecies of the destruction of Tyre, in the xxvith, xxviith and xxviiith chapters of Ezekiel; from which many of the expressions used in the Revelation, concerning the destruction of the kingdom of antichrist, are taken, and which is evidently made use of in scripture as a type of the latter. These prophecies of the destruction of Tyre were fulfilled by various steps. Many things were fulfilled in the destruction of the old city by Nebuchadnezzar;‡ and yet other parts of the same prophecy were fulfilled by Alexander;§ which was about 240 years afterwards. And yet both these desolations are prophesied of under one.

And thus it seems to me very probable, that it will prove, with respect to the prophecies of the destruction of mystical Babylon. It is, I think, pretty manifest by the prophecies, that this antichristian hierarchy and apostate church will at last be so destroyed, that there shall be no remainder of it left, and shall have as perfect a desolation, before God has done with her, as old Babylon had; there shall be no such thing as Pope or church of Rome in the world.‖ It seems also pretty manifest, that after that event which is chiefly intended in the prophecies of antichrist's destruction, there will be some remains of the Romish church This appears by that most particular and large description of that destruction, Rev. xviii. There it seems to be implied, not only that many shall yet remain of the church of Rome, who shall bewail her overthrow, of her people and clergy; (ver. 11, 15, 17, 18.) But that there should be some princes among them, "Kings of the earth, that have committed fornication, and lived deliciously with her;" (ver. 9, 10.) And it is exceeding improbable in itself, that every Papist, in each quarter of the world, should be destroyed, or cease from the world, at one blow.

And as long as so considerable a number remains, as may be gathered from the prophecy, they will doubtless have an hierarchy; and one among them that will bear the name of a Pope, although the church of Rome shall be mainly destroyed, and the interest of Popery shall be sunk very low in the world. So that there will yet remain a papal church and hierarchy in the world, to be wholly extirpated at another period, sometime after that great overthrow principally insisted on in the prophecies. And this second destruction of antichrist, or rather extirpation of his remains, together with the complete extirpation of all remains of mahometanism, heathenism, and heresy through the world—and the finishing stroke towards the overthrow of Satan's visible kingdom on earth, and so the beginning of the *millennium*, or spiritual rest of the world—may, for ought I know, be about the time Mr. Lowman speaks of; agreeable to the opinion of the ancient Jews, and many christian divines who have followed them, that the world would stand six thousand years; and then, the seventh thousand years should be the world's rest or sabbath. The ruin of the popish interest is but a small part of what is

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* *Prideaux's* Connection, part I. p. 183, 184, and 267, 268, 269. Edit. 9. and p. 271, and 272. † *Prid.* Connection, part I. p. 808—812. ‡ Ibid. 128, 129, 130. § Ibid p. 693. ‖ See Rev. xviii. 21—23.—and xix. 20, 21. Dan. vii. 26, 27.

throw the kingdom of antichrist, and in its issue destroy Satan's visible kingdom on earth, will begin in a like time.—The pre-

requisite, in order to introduce and settle such a state of things, as the millennium described. For then Rev. xx. Satan's visible kingdom is every where totally extirpated, and a perfect end put to all heresies, delusions, and false religions whatsoever, through the whole earth. Satan thenceforth *deceives the nations no more*, and has no place any where but in hell.

This is the sabbatism of the world; when all shall be in a holy rest, when the wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and there shall be nothing to hurt or offend; there shall be abundance of peace, the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the seas, and God's people shall dwell in quiet resting-places. There is not the least reason to think, that all this will be brought to pass as it were at one stroke; or that, from the present lamentable state of things, there shall be brought about and completed the destruction of the church of Rome—the entire extirpation of all infidelity, heresies, superstitions, and schisms, through all Christendom—the conversion of all the Jews, the full enlightning and conversion of all Mahometan and heathen nations, through the whole earth—the full settlement of all in the pure christian faith and order and all by means of the victory of the church in *one great conflict* with her enemies. This would contradict many things in scripture, which represent this great event to be brought to pass by a gradual progress of religion; as leaven that gradually spreads, till it has diffused itself through the whole lump; and a plant of mustard, which from a very small seed, gradually becomes a great tree; Matth xiii. 31, 32, 33.) "And like seed which a man casts upon the ground, that springs and grows up, night and day; and first brings forth the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear." And especially would this contradict the prophetical representation of Ezek. xlvii. where the progress of religion is represented by the gradual increase of the waters of the sanctuary. At first, they are a small spring issuing out from under the threshold of the temple; then, after they had run a thousand cubits, they are up to the ankles; at the end of another thousand cubits, up to the knees; at the end of another thousand, up to the loins. Afterwards they become a great river, that could not be passed over; and are finally brought into the sea, healing the waters even of the vast ocean.

If the Spirit of God should be immediately poured out, and that work of God's power and grace should now begin, which in its progress and issue should complete this glorious effect; there must be an amazing and unparalleled progress of the work and manifestation of divine power to bring so much to pass, by the year 2000. Would it not be a great thing to be accomplished in one half century, that religion, in the power and purity of it, should so prevail, as to gain the conquest over all those many things that stand in opposition to it among Protestants, and gain the upper hand through the Protestant world? And if in another, it should go on so to prevail, as to get the victory over all the opposition and strength of the kingdom of antichrist, so as to gain the ascendency in that which is now the popish world? And if in a third half-century, it should prevail and subdue the greater part of the Mahometan world, and bring in the Jewish nation, in all their dispersions? And would it not be wonderful if in the next whole century, the whole heathen world should be be enlightened, and converted to the christian faith, throughout all parts of Africa, Asia, America and Terra Australis, and be thoroughly settled in christian faith and order, without any remainders of their old delusions and superstitions; and this attended with an utter extirpation of the remnant of the church of Rome, and all the relics of Mahometanism, heresy, schism and enthusiasm—a suppression of all remains of open vice and immorality, every sort of visible enemy to true religion, through the whole earth—an end of all the unhappy commotions, tumults, and calamities occasioned by such great changes—and all things be so adjusted and settled that the world thenceforward should enjoy an holy rest or sabbatism?—I have thus distinguished what belongs to a bringing of the world from its present state, to the happy state of the millennium, the better to give a view of the *greatness of the work*; and not, that I pretend so much as to conjecture, that things will be accomplished just *in this order*. The whole work is not the less great and wonderful, to be accomplished in such a space of time, in whatever order the different parts of it succeed each other. They that think that what has been mentioned would not be swift progress, yea,

phecy of the 6th Vial, (Rev. xvi. 12—16.) if we take it in its connection with the other vials, and consider those providential events by which the preceding vials have manifestly been fulfilled, I humbly conceive, affords just ground for such a hope.

It is very plain, from this whole chapter, as also the preceding and following, that all these seven vials are vials of God's wrath on antichrist; one is not poured out on the Jews, another on the Turks, another on Pagans, another on the church of Rome; but they all signify God's successive judgments or plagues on the beast and his kingdom, which is in this chapter and almost every where in this book, called Great Babylon. And therefore undoubtedly, when it is said, "The sixth angel poured out his vial on the river Euphrates, and the water thereof was dried up, that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared;" by the river Euphrates is meant something some way appertaining to this mystical Babylon; as the river Euphrates appertained to the literal Babylon. And it is very manifest, that in the prophecy of this vial there is an allusion to that by which the way was prepared for the destruction of Babylon by Cyrus. This was done by turning the channel of the river Euphrates, which ran through the midst of the city. Hereby the way of the kings of the east, the princes of Media and Persia, was *prepared* to come in, under the walls of the city, at each end, and to destroy it; as they did that night wherein Daniel interpreted the hand-writing on the wall, against Belshazzar, Dan. v. 30.

The prophecies of Babylon's destruction, from time to time, take notice of this way of destroying her, by drying up the waters of the river Euphrates, to prepare the way for her enemies; Isai. xliv. 27, 28. "That saith to the deep, be dry, and I will dry up thy rivers; that saith of Cyrus, he is my servant, and shall perform all my pleasure." Jer. li. 31, 32. "One post shall run to meet another, to shew the king of Babylon that his city is taken at one end, and that the passages are stopped, and the reeds they have burnt with fire, and the men of war are affrighted." And ver. 36. "I will dry up her sea, and make her springs dry." The Medes and Persians, the people that destroyed Babylon, dwelt to the *eastward* of Babylon, and are spoken of as coming from the *east* to her destruction; Isai. xlvi. 11. "Calling a ravenous bird from the *east;* the man that executeth my counsel, from a far country." And the princes that joined with this ravenous bird from the east, in this affair of destroying Babylon, are called *kings*, Jer. li. 11. "The Lord

amazingly swift, do not consider how great the work is, and the vast and innumerable obstacles that are in the way. It was a wonderful thing, when the christian religion, after Christ's ascension, so prevailed, as to get the ascendency in the Roman empire in about 300 years; but that was nothing to this.

hath raised up the spirit of the *kings* of the Medes; for his device is against Babylon to destroy it." Ver. 28. "Prepare against her the nations, with the *kings* of the Medes, the captains thereof, and the rulers thereof." The drying of the channel of the river Euphrates, to prepare the way for these kings and captains of the east to enter into that city, under its high walls, was the last thing done by the besiegers of Babylon, before her actual destruction. In like manner, the sixth is the last vial but one of God's wrath on the mystical Babylon; and the effect of it is the drying up of the channel, the last thing done against it before its actual destruction by the seventh vial.—This opens the way for those who fight in a spiritual war against it, speedily to bring on its ruin.

Hence I think it may without dispute be determined, that by the river Euphrates in the prophecy of this vial, is meant something appertaining to the mystical Babylon, or the antichristian church and kingdom, that serves it, in a way answerable to that in which the river Euphrates served old Babylon, and the removal of which will in like manner prepare the way for the enemies to destroy her. And therefore what we have to do in the first place, in order to find out what is intended by the river Euphrates in this prophecy, is to consider how the literal Euphrates served old Babylon. And it may be noted, that Euphrates was of remarkable benefit to that city in two respects: it served the city as a *supply;* it was let through the midst of the city by an artificial canal, and ran through the midst of the palace of the king of Babylon; that part of his palace called the *old palace*, standing on one side, and the other part called the *new palace*, on the other; with communications from one part to another, above the waters, by a bridge, and under the waters, by a vaulted or arched passage, that the city, and especially the palace, might be plentifully supplied with water. Another way that the waters of Euphrates served Babylon, was as an impediment and obstacle in the way of its enemies, to hinder their access to destroy it. For there was a vast moat round the city, without the walls, of prodigious width and depth, filled with the water of the river, to hinder the access of her besiegers: and at each end of the city, the river served instead of walls. And therefore when Cyrus had dried up the river, the moat was emptied, and the channel of the river under the walls left dry; and so his way was prepared.

Therefore it is natural to suppose, that by drying up the waters of the river Euphrates, in the prophecy of the destruction of the new Babylon, to prepare the way of her enemies, is meant the drying up her incomes and supplies; and the removal of those things which hitherto have been the chief obstacles in the way of those who in this book are represented as

at war with her, and seeking her destruction: (Rev. xix. 11, to the end, and chap. xii. 7.) Those things which have hindered their progress and success, or have been the chief impediments in the way of the Protestant religion. The first thing is the drying of the streams of wealth, the temporal supplies, revenues, and vast incomes of the Romish church, and the riches of the popish dominions. *Waters* in scripture language very often signify *provision* and *supplies*, both temporal and spiritual.* The temporal supplies of a people are very often in scripture called water; as Isai. v. 13. "Therefore my people is gone into captivity, and their honourable men are famished, and their multitude dried up with thirst," i. e. deprived of the supports and supplies of life. And the drying up of the waters of a city or kingdom, is often used in scripture prophecy, for depriving them of their wealth, as the scripture explains itself, Hos. xiii. 15. "His spring shall become dry and his fountain shall be dried up; He shall spoil the treasure of all pleasant vessels." Isai. xv. 6, 7. "The waters of Nimrim shall be desolate; for the hay is withered; the grass faileth; there is no green thing. Therefore the abundance they have gotten, and that which they have laid up, shall they carry away to the brook of the willows." The *brook of the willows*, seems to refer to the waters of Assyria or Chaldea, whose streams abounded with willows. (Compare Psal. cxxxvii. 2.) So that the carrying away of the treasures of Moab, and the adding of them to the treasures of Assyria, is here represented by the figure of turning away the waters of Nimrim from the country of Moab, and adding them to the waters of Assyria, as the prophecy explains itself. Yea, even in the prophecies of the destruction of Babylon itself, the depriving her of her treasures, seems to be one thing intended by the drying up of her waters. This seems manifest by the words of the prophecy in Jer. l. 37, 38. "A sword is upon her treasures, and they shall be robbed: a drought is upon her waters, and they shall be dried up." Compared with chap. li. 13. "O thou that dwellest upon many waters, abundant in treasures:" with ver. 36. "I will dry up her sea, and make her springs dry." The wealth, revenues, and vast incomes of the church of Rome, are the waters by which that Babylon has been nourished and supported; these are the waters which the popish clergy and members of the Romish hierarchy thirst after, and are continually drinking down, with insatiable appetite; and they are waters that have been flowing into that spiritual city like a great river; ecclesiastical persons possessing a very great part of the popish dominions. Accordingly, this Babylon is represented as vastly rich, in the

* See Prov. ix. 17. Isai. xxxiii. 16.—xliii. 20.—lv. i.—and lviii. 11. Jer. ii. 13 and 18.—xvii. 8 and 13, and in other places innumerable.

prophecy of the Apocalypse, especially in the 17th and 18th chapters. These are especially the waters that supply the palace of the king of this new Babylon, viz. the Pope; as the river Euphrates ran through the midst of the palace of the king of old Babylon. The revenues of the Pope have been like waters of a great river, coming into his palace, from innumerable fountains, and by innumerable lesser streams, coming from many various and distant countries.

This prophecy represents to us two cities very contrary the one to the other: viz. New Babylon and the New Jerusalem, and a river running through the midst of each. The New Jerusalem, which signifies the church of Christ, especially in her best estate, is described as having "a river running through the midst of it." Rev. xxii. 1, 2. This river, as might easily be made most evident, by comparing this with abundance of other scriptures, undoubtedly signifies the *divine supplies:* the rich and abundant spiritual incomes and provision of that holy city. Mr. LOWMAN, in his Exposition, says, "It represents a constant *provision* for the comfortable and happy life of all the inhabitants of this city of God." And in his notes on the same place, he observes as follows: "Water, (says he) as necessary to the support of life, and as it contributes in great cities, especially in hot eastern countries, to the ornament of the place, and delight of the inhabitants, is a very proper representation of the enjoyment of all things, both for the support and pleasure of life." As the river that runs through the New Jerusalem, the church of Christ, refreshing that holy spiritual society, signifies their spiritual supplies, to satisfy their spiritual thirst; so the river that runs through the new Babylon, the antichristian church, that wicked carnal society, signifies, according to the opposite character of the city, her worldly *carnal supplies*, to satisfy their carnal desires and thirstings.

The new Jerusalem is called in this book the *Paradise of God*, and therefore is represented as having the tree of life growing in it (chap. ii. 7. and xxii. 2.) And it being described as though a river ran through the midst of it, there seems to be some allusion to the ancient paradise in Eden, of which we are told that there ran a river through the midst of it to water it; (Gen. ii. 10.) i. e. to supply the plants of it with nourishment. And this river was this very same river Euphrates, which afterwards ran through Babylon. And in one and the other, it represented the divers *supplies* of two opposite cities. In Eden it represented the *spiritual supplies* and wealth of the true christian church, in her spiritual advancement and glory; (Rev. xxii. 1, 2.) In the other, it represented the outward *carnal supplies* of the false antichristian church, in her worldly pomp and vain glory, (chap. xvi. 12.)

When the waters that supply this mystical Babylon, come to be dried up in this sense, it will prepare the way for the enemies of antichristian corruption, that seek her overthrow.—The wealth of the church of Rome, and of the powers that support it, is very much its *defence*. After the streams of her revenues and riches are dried up, or very greatly diminished, her walls will be as it were broken down, and she will become weak and defenceless, and exposed to easy ruin.*

As the river Euphrates served the city Babylon for *supply;* so, as before observed, it served as an *impediment* or *obstacle*, to

* When Joab had taken that part of the city of Rabbah, which was called the city of waters, whence the city had its supply of water, the fountains of the brook Jabbok being probably there—and which was also called the *royal city*, probably because there the king had his palace and gardens, on account of its peculiar pleasantness—the conquest of the rest of the city was easy. His message to David implies, that the city now might be taken at pleasure (2 Sam. xii. 27, 28.) It is possible that by the pouring out of the sixth vial to dry up the river of the mystical Babylon, there might be something like the taking of the city of waters in Rabbah. Some chief one of the Popish powers—that has been the main strength and support of the popish cause, or from whence that church has its chief supplies,—may be destroyed, or converted, or greatly reduced. But these events must determine.

In the prophecies of Egypt's destruction, it is signified that when their rivers and waters should be dried up, in that sense, that the streams of their temporal supplies should be averted from them, their defence would be gone; Isai. xix, 4, &c. "The Egyptians will I give over into the hand of a cruel lord—and the waters shall fail from the sea, and the river shall be wasted and dried up, and the brooks of *defence* shall be emptied and dried up, and the reeds and flags shall wither Every thing sown by the brooks shall wither: The fishers also shall mourn."

Those whose way was prepared to come in and destroy Babylon, by drying up the river Euphrates, were the army that was at war with Babylon, Cyrus and his host who sought her overthrow. There seems also to be all reason to suppose, that those whose way will be prepared to destroy mystical Babylon, by drying up the mystical Euphrates, are that king and army who are in the book of revelation represented as *at war with antichrist*. And what king and army that is, we may see in chap. xii. 7. and xix. 11. to the end; Michael the king of angels, and his angels; he whose "name is called the word of God and that has on his vesture, and on his thigh a name written, King of kings, and Lord of lords; and the heavenly armies that follow him, clothed in fine linen, white and clean." Cyrus, the chief of the kings of the east, that destroyed Babylon, redeemed God's church from thence, and restored Jerusalem, seems in that particular affair manifestly to be spoken of as a type of Christ. God calls him "his shepherd, to perform his pleasure, to say to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be built, and to the temple, Thy foundation shall be laid," (Isai. xliv. 28.) God calls him his *Messiah;* (chap. xlv. 1.) *Thus saith the Lord to his anointed* (in the original, *to his Messiah*) *to Cyrus*. He is spoken of as one *that God had raised up in righteousness, that he might build his city, and freely redeem his captives, or let them go without price or reward*, (chap. xlv. 13.) He is said to be one whom *God had loved;* (chap. xlviii. 14.) as the *Messiah* is said to be *God's elect, in whom his soul delighteth*. As by Babylon, in the Revelation, is meant that antichristian society, which is typified by old Babylon; so by the kings of the east, that should destroy this antichristian church, must be meant those enemies of it who were typified by Cyrus, and other chieftains of the east, that destroyed old Babylon; viz. Christ, who was born, lived, died and rose in the east, together with those spiritual princes that follow him, the principalities and powers in heavenly places, and those ministers and saints that are *kings and priests*, and shall reign on earth; especially those leaders and heads of God's people, those christian ministers and magistrates, that shall be distinguished as public blessings to his church, and chief instruments of the overthrow of antichrist.

hinder the access of its enemies: for there was a vast moat round the city, filled with the water of the river, which was left empty when Euphrates was dried up. And therefore we may suppose that another thing meant by the effect of the sixth vial, is the removal of those things which hitherto have been the *chief obstacles* to the progress of true religion, and the victory of the church of Christ over her enemies. These have been the corrupt *doctrines* and *practices* which have prevailed in Protestant countries, the *doubts* and *difficulties* that attend many doctrines of the true religion, and the many *divisions* and *contentions* that subsist among Protestants. The removal of those would wonderfully prepare the way for Christ and his armies, to go forward and prevail against their enemies, in a glorious propagation of true religion. So that this vial, which is to prepare the way for Christ and his people, seems to have respect to that remarkable *preparing of the way* for Christ, by *levelling mountains*, *exalting valleys*, *drying up rivers*, and *removing stumbling-blocks*, which is often spoken of in the prophecies, as what shall next precede the church's latter-day glory; (as Isai. xlii. 13, &c.) "The Lord shall go forth as a mighty man; he shall stir up jealousy as a man of war; he shall prevail against his enemies.—I will make waste mountains and hills, and dry up all their herbs: and I will make the rivers islands, and I will dry up the pools; and I will bring the blind by a way that they know not, and I will lead them in paths that they have not known; I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight: these things will I do unto them, and not forsake them." (Chap. xl. 3—5.) "Prepare ye the way of the Lord; make straight in the desert a high-way for our God: every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low, and the crooked shall be made straight, and rough places plain; and the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together." (Chap. xi. 15, 16.) "And the Lord shall utterly destroy the tongue of the Egyptian sea, and with his mighty wind shall he shake his hand over the river, and shall smite it in the seven streams thereof, and make men go over dry shod: and there shall be an highway for the remnant of his people which shall be left from Assyria, like as it was to Israel, in the day that he came out of the land of Egypt." (Chap. lvii. 14.) "Cast ye up, cast ye up, prepare the way, take up the stumbling-block out of the way of my people." And, (chap. lxii. 10.) "Go through, go through the gates; prepare ye the way of the people; cast up, cast up the highway; gather out the stones; lift up a standard for the people." (Zech. x. 10—12.) "I will bring them again also out of the land of Egypt, and gather them out of Assyria; and I will bring them into the land of Gilead and Lebanon; and place shall not be found for them. And he shall pass through the sea with affliction, and

shall smite the waves of the sea; and all the deeps of the river shall dry up; and the pride of Assyria shall be brought down and the sceptre of Egypt shall depart away: And I will strengthen them in the Lord, and they shall walk up and down in his name, saith the Lord." And it is worthy to be remarked, that as Cyrus destroying Babylon, letting go God's captives from thence, and restoring Jerusalem, is certainly typical of Christ's destroying mystical Babylon, delivering his people from her tyranny, and gloriously building up the spiritual Jerusalem in the latter days; so God preparing Cyrus's way, by drying up the river Euphrates, is spoken of in similar terms, to signify the preparing of Christ's way, when he shall come to accomplish the latter event. Thus God says concerning Cyrus, (Isai. xlv. 2.) "I will go before thee, and *make crooked places straight.*" And (ver. 13.) *I will direct*, or *make straight* (as it is in the margin) *all his ways.* This is like chapter xl. 2. 4. "Prepare ye the way of the Lord; make straight in the desert a highway for our God.—The crooked things shall be made straight." (Chap. xlii. 16.) "I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight."*

* If any should object against understanding the river Euphrates, in Rev xvi. 12, as signifying what has been supposed, that in another place in this prophecy, it is manifestly not so to be understood, viz. in chap. ix. 14, "Saying to the sixth angel which had the trumpet, Loose the four angels which are bound in the great river Euphrates:" and that there is no reason to understand it in the vision of the sixth vial, as signifying something diverse from what is meant by the same river in the vision of the sixth trumpet:

I answer, That there appears to me to be good reason for a diverse understanding of the river Euphrates in these two different places: the diversity of the scene of the vision, and of the kind of representation, in those two parts of this prophecy, naturally requires it. It is in this book, as in the old testament: when the river Euphrates is spoken of in the old testament, both in the histories and prophecies, it is mentioned with regard to a two-fold relation; 1st, in its relation to Babylon; as its *defence* and *supply.* 2dly, in its relation to the land of Israel, God's visible people. And as it was related to that, it was its eastern boundary. (Gen. xv. 18. Exod. xxiii. 31. Deut. i. 7. and xi. 24. Josh. i. 4. 2 Sam. viii. 3. 1 Chron. xviii. 3. 1 Kings iv. 21. Ezra iv. 20.) Agreeable to this diverse relation of this river, under which it is mentioned in the old testament, so must we understand it differently in different parts of the prophecy of this book of Revelation, according as the nature and subject of the vision requires.

In the xvth chapter, where the vision is of God's plagues on Babylon, preparing the way for her destruction, there, when the river Euphrates is mentioned, we are naturally and necessarily led to consider it as something appertaining to the mystical Babylon, as Euphrates did to old Babylon. But we cannot understand it so in the ixth chapter, for there the prophecy is not about Babylon. To mention Euphrates there, as something belonging to Babylon, would have been improper; for the nature of the vision, and prophetical representation, did not lead to it, nor allow it. John had no vision of Babylon; that kind of representation had not been made to him; not a word is said about Babylon till we come to the second part of this prophecy, after John had the vision of the second book, and Christ had said to him, "Thou must prophesy again before peoples, and nations, and kings," chap. xi. The scene of the vision in the former part of the prophecy had been more especially the land of Israel; and the vision is concerning two sorts of persons there, viz. Those of the tribes of Israel who had the seal of God in their foreheads, and those wicked apostate Israelites who had not this mark. (Compare chap. vii. 3—8, and chap. ix. 4.) The vision in this ixth chapter, is of God's

It is true, we do not know how long this vial may continue running, and so Christ's way preparing, before it is fully

judgments on those of the tribes of Israel, or in the land of Israel, which had not the seal of God in their foreheads. And therefore when mention is made (ver. 14.) of a judgment coming on them from the river Euphrates, it must mean in the former respect, with relation to the land of Israel, as its eastern border; and thereby we must understand that God would bring *some terrible calamity* on Christendom from its *eastern border*, as he did when the Turks were let loose on Christendom.

If these things are intended in the prophecy of the sixth vial, it affords, as I conceive, great reason to hope that the *beginning* of that glorious work of God's Spirit, which in its progress and issue will overthrow antichrist, and introduce the glory of the latter days, is not very far off. Mr. LOWMAN has, I think, put it beyond all reasonable doubt, that the fifth vial was poured out in the time of the reformation. It also appears, by his Exposition, that take one vial with another, it has not been, from the beginning of one vial to the beginning of another, but about 184 years. But it is now about 220 years since the fifth vial began to be poured; and it is a long time since the main effects of it have been finished. And therefore, if the sixth vial has not already began to be poured out, it may well be speedily expected.

But with regard to drying up the *fountains and streams of wealth*, the temporal incomes and supplies of the antichristian church and territories, I would propose it to consideration, whether or no many things that have come to pass within these twenty years past, may not be looked upon as probable beginnings of a fulfilment of this prophecy. Particularly, what the kings of Spain and Portugal did some years since, when displeased with the Pope, forbidding any thenceforward going to Rome for investitures, &c. thereby cutting off two great streams of the Pope's wealth, from so great and rich a part of the popish world; and its becoming so frequent a thing of late for popish princes, in their wars, to make bold with the treasure of the church, and to *tax* the *clergy* within their dominions, as well as the laity; or, which is equivalent, to oblige them to contribute great sums, under the name *of a free gift*. To which may be added, the late peeling and impoverishing of the Pope's temporal dominions in Italy, by the armies of the Austrians, Neapolitans and Spaniards, passing and repassing through them, and living so much at discretion in them, of which the Pope has so loudly complained in vain; receiving nothing but menaces, when he has objected against giving liberty for the like passage in future. These things make it hopeful, that the time is coming when the princes of Europe, "the ten horns, shall hate the whore, and make her desolate and naked, and eat her flesh:" (Rev. xvii. 16.) which will prepare the way for what next follows, "her being burnt with fire;" even as the sixth vial poured out—to consume the supplies of antichrist, and "strip him naked" of his wealth, and as it were "to pick his flesh off from his bones"—will make way for what next follows, the seventh vial, that will consume antichrist by the fierceness of God's wrath.

Besides the things already mentioned, there are also some others that have lately happened to dry up the wealthy fountains and streams of the antichristian dominions. Among these we may reckon the almost ruined trade of France and Spain, the two chief popish kingdoms, the main support of the popish cause, and from whence the kingdom of antichrist has had of late its main supplies. The almost miraculous taking of Cape Breton, in the year 1745, whereby was dried up one of the principal sources of the wealth of the kingdom of France; and the no less, but yet more wonderful disappointment of the French, in their great attempt to repossess themselves of it, and the confounding of their great Armada, under Duke D'Anville, by a most visible hand of God against them, the last year; and in now again baffling a second attempt of our obstinate enemies, this year, by delivering up their men of war, with their warlike forces and stores, in their way to America, into the hands of the English admirals Anson and Warren. Moreover, the strange and unaccountable consuming of the great magazines of the French East-India company at Port L'Orient, with their magnificent buildings, the last year—scarce any thing of the great stores there laid up being saved out of the flames—the awful destruction by an earthquake, the last year, of that great and rich city Lima, the centre of the South-Sea trade and the capital of Peru, the richest country in the world, from whence comes more of its silver and gold than any

prepared: but yet if there be reason to think the effect of this vial is begun, or is near, then there is reason also to think

other country—from whence Spain is principally supplied with its wealth, and where the French had a great trade; the destruction of the city being attended with the destruction of all the ships in the harbour, which were dashed to pieces, as it were, in a moment, by the immediate hand of God; many of which were doubtless laden with vast treasures. I might have mentioned the taking of Porto-Bello, not long before this, by a very small force, though a place of very great strength, where the Spanish galleons used principally to go, to carry the wealth of Peru to Spain. Besides the taking from the French and Spaniards so many of their ships, laden with vast riches, trading to the South-Seas, the East and West-Indies, and the Levant.

And here it is especially worthy of notice, that when the French seemed to have gotten so great an advantage of the English factory at Madras, they were so frustrated, as to the benefit and gains they expected, by the hand of heaven against them, immediately pursuing the conquerors with tempest, wrecking their ships laden with spoils; and after that, delivering up into the hands of the English their East-India fleet, with their stores and immense treasures, intended for confirming to themselves the advantage they seem to have gained by the forementioned conquest: at the same instant, also delivering into our hands their strong force intended for the regaining that great fountain of their wealth, which they had lost at Cape-Breton. And since that, delivering into the hands of Sir Peter Warren so great a part of their vast and rich fleet from the West-Indies.

And one thing with relation to the taking of Cape-Breton, though it may seem trivial, yet I do not think to be altogether inconsiderable in the present case; and that is, that thereby the antichristian dominions are deprived of a very great part of their fish, which makes no small part of the food and support of popish countries; their superstition forbidding them to eat any flesh for near a third part of the year. This they were supplied with much more from Cape-Breton than from any place in the world in the possession of papists. And the contention of France with the Dutch, deprives them of most of their supplies of this sort, which they had elsewhere. When the prophet Isaiah foretells the depriving Egypt of its wealth and temporal supplies, under the figure of drying up their rivers, this is particularly mentioned, that they should be deprived of their fish. Isai. xix. 4, &c. "And the Egyptians will I give over into the hand of a cruel Lord—And the waters shall fail from the sea, and the river shall be wasted and dried up; and they shall turn the rivers far away, and the brooks of defence shall be emptied and dried up.—The fishers also shall mourn, and all they that cast angle into the brooks shall lament, and they that spread nets upon the waters shall languish." This is expressed in the prophecies of drying up the waters, i. e. the supplies of Egypt; and this probably is implied in the prophecies of drying up the waters of that city which is spiritually called Egypt. And it may be noted, that this is not only a supply that the church of antichrist has literally out of the waters, but is that part which is eminently the supply and food of their antichristian superstition, or which their popish religion makes necessary for them.

These things duly considered, I imagine, afford us ground to suppose, not only that the effect of this sixth vial is already *begun*, but that some *progress* is already made in it, and that this vial is now running apace. And when it shall be finished, there is all reason to suppose that the destruction of antichrist will very speedily follow; and that the two last vials will succeed one another more closely than the other vials. When once the river Euphrates was dried up, and Cyrus's way was prepared, he delayed not, but immediately entered into the city to destroy it. Nor is it God's manner, when once his way is prepared, to delay to deliver his church, and shew mercy to Zion. When once impediments are removed, Christ will no longer remain at a distance, but will be like a roe or a young hart, coming swiftly to the help of his people. When that cry is made, Isai. lvii. 14. "Cast ye up, cast ye up, prepare the way, &c." The high and lofty One that inhabits eternity, is represented as very near to revive the spirit of the contrite, and deliver his people with whom he had been wroth, (ver. 15 to the end.) When that cry is made, Isai. xl. Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert an highway for our God: every valley shall be exalted, &c. God tells his church, that her warfare is accomplished, and the time to comfort her

that the beginning of that great work of God's spirit, in the revival of religion, which, before it is finished, will issue in antichrist's ruin, is not far off. For it is pretty manifest, that the beginning of this work will accompany the sixth vial. For the gathering together of the armies on both sides, on the side of Christ and antichrist, to that great battle that shall issue in the overthrow of the latter, will be under this vial; (compare Rev. xvi. 12, 13, 14, with chap. xix. 11, to the end.) And it is plain, that Christ manifesting himself wonderfully appearing, after long hiding himself, to plead his own and his people's cause, and riding forth against his enemies in a glorious manner—and his people following him in pure linen, or "the practice of righteousness and pure religion"—will be the alarm to antichrist, and cause him to gather that vast host to make the utmost opposition. But this alarm and gathering together is represented as being under the sixth vial. So that it will be a great *revival*, and a mighty *progress* of true religion under the sixth vial, eminently threatening the speedy and utter overthrow of Satan's kingdom on earth, that will so mightily rouse the old serpent to exert himself with such exceeding violence, in that greatest conflict and struggle that ever he had with Christ and the church, since the world stood.

All the seven vials bring terrible *judgments* upon antichrist; but there seems to be something distinguishing in the three last, the "fifth, sixth, and seventh, viz. That they more directly tend to overthrow his kingdom;" and accordingly, each of them is attended with a great reviving of religion. The fifth vial was attended with such a revival and reformation, as greatly weakened and diminished the throne or kingdom of the beast, and went far towards its ruin. It seems as though the sixth vial should be much more so; for it is the distinguishing note of this vial, that it is the *preparatory*, which more than any other vial *prepares the way* for Christ's coming to destroy the kingdom of antichrist, and to set up his own kingdom in the world.

Besides, those things which belong to the "preparation of Christ's way," so often represented by levelling mountains, drying up rivers, &c. viz. "Unravelling intricacies, and removing difficulties attending christian doctrines; distinguishing

is come, and that the glory of the Lord now shall be revealed, and all flesh see it together, ver. 1—5. And agreeable to these things, Christ on the pouring out the sixth vial, says, "Behold I come," Rev. xvi. 15. The sixth vial is the forerunner of the seventh or last, to prepare its way. The angel that pours out this vial is the harbinger of Christ; and when the harbinger is come, the king is at hand. *John the Baptist*, Christ's harbinger, who came to level mountains and fill up vallies, proclaimed, "The king of heaven is at hand; and when he had prepared Christ's way, the Lord suddenly came into his temple, even the messenger of the covenant," Mal. iii. 1.

between true religion and its false appearances; detecting and exploring errors and corrupt principles; reforming the wicked lives of professors," which have been the chief stumbling-blocks and obstacles that have hitherto hindered the progress of true religion: these things are the proper work of the Spirit of God, promoting and advancing divine light and true piety, and can be the effect of nothing else.

And that the *beginning* of that glorious work of God's Spirit, which shall finally bring on the church's latter-day glory, will accompany that other effect of this vial—turning the streams of the wealth of the world, bringing its treasures, and the gains of its trade and navigation, into the true protestant church of Christ—seems very manifest, because this very effect is spoken of as that which shall be at the beginning of this glorious work. Isai. lx. 8, 9. "Who are these that fly as a cloud, and as doves to their windows? Surely the isles shall wait for me, and the ships of Tarshish *first*, to bring thy sons from far, their silver and gold with them, unto the name of the Lord thy God, and to the holy one of Israel, because he hath glorified thee." So that it is to be hoped, that before this effect, now probably begun, is at an end, the Spirit of God will so influence the hearts of the Protestants, that they will be disposed to devote to the service of God the silver and gold they take from their popish enemies, and the gains of their trade and navigation, both to the East and West Indies, so that "their merchandize and hire shall be holiness to the Lord."

Agreeably to what has been supposed, that an extraordinary outpouring of the Spirit of God is to accompany this sixth vial; so the beginning of a work of extraordinary awakening has already attended the probable beginning of it, continued in one place or other for many years past: although it has been, in some places, mingled with much enthusiasm, after the manner of things in their first beginnings, unripe, and mixed with much crudity. But it is to be hoped, a far more pure, extensive and glorious revival of religion is not far off, which will more properly be the beginning of that work which in its issue shall overthrow the kingdom of antichrist, and of Satan through the world. But God "will be enquired of for this, by the house of Israel to do it for them."

If, notwithstanding all I have said, it be still judged there is sufficient reason to determine, that the ruin of antichrist is at *a very great distance;* and if all I have said—as arguing that the beginning of that glorious revival of religion, which in its continuance and progress will destroy the kingdom of antichrist, is not very far off—be judged to be of no force; yet it will not follow, that our complying with what is proposed to us in the late memorial from Scotland, will be in vain, or not followed with such spiritual blessings, as will richly recompense the pains

of such extraordinary prayer for the Holy Spirit, and the revival of religion. If God does not grant that greatest of all effusions of his Spirit, so soon as we desire; yet we shall have the conscious satisfaction of having employed ourselves in a manner that is certainly agreeable to Christ's will and frequent commands—in being much in prayer for this mercy, much more than has heretofore been common with christians—and there will be all reason to hope, that we shall receive some blessed token of his acceptance. If the fall of mystical Babylon, and the work of God's Spirit that shall bring it to pass, be at several hundred years' distance; yet, it follows not that there will be no happy *revivals of religion* before that time, which shall be richly worth the most diligent, earnest and constant prayer.

SECT. V.

The charge of Novelty answered.

I would say something to one objection more, and then hasten to the conclusion of this discourse.—Some may be ready to object, that what is proposed in this memorial is a *new thing*, such as never was put in practice in the church of God before.

If there be something *circumstantially* new in it, this cannot be a sufficient objection. The duty of *prayer* is no new duty. For many of God's people expressly to agree, as touching *something they shall ask* in prayer, is no new thing. For God's people to agree on circumstances of *time and place* for united prayer, according to their own discretion, is no new thing. For *many*, *in different places*, to agree to offer up *extraordinary prayers* to God at the *same time*, as a token of their union, is no new thing; but has been commonly practised in the appointment of days of fasting and prayer for special mercies. And if the people of God should engage in the duty of prayer for the coming of Christ's kingdom, in a *new manner*—that they resolve not to be so negligent in this duty, as has been common with professors of religion heretofore, but will be more frequent and fervent in it—this would be such a new thing as *ought* to be, and would be only to *reform a former negligence*. And for the people of God in various parts of the world, visibly, and by express agreement to *unite* for this extraordinary prayer, is no more than their duty; and no more than what is foretold the people of God should *actually* do, before the time comes of the church's promised glory on earth. And if this be a *duty*, then it is a duty to come into some *method* to render this *practicable:* but

it is not practicable (as was shewn before) but by *this method*, or some other *equivalent.*

And as to *this particular method*, proposed to promote union in extraordinary prayer—God's people in various parts setting apart fixed seasons, to return at certain periods, wherein they agree to offer up their prayers at the same time—it is not so new as some may possibly imagine. This may appear by what follows; which is a part of a paper, dispersed abroad in Great Britain and Ireland, from London, in the year 1712, being the latter end of queen Anne's reign, and very extensively complied with, entitled, "A serious call from the city to the country, to join with them in setting apart some time, viz. from seven to eight, every Tuesday morning, for the solemn seeking of God, each one in his closet, now in this so critical a juncture." —"Jonah i. 6. Call upon God, if so be that God will think upon us, that we perish not." What follows is an extract from it:

"You have formerly been called upon to the like duty, and have complied with it; and that not without success. It is now thought highly seasonable to renew the call. It is hoped that you will not be more backward, when it is so apparent that there is even greater need. It is scarce imaginable how a professing people should stand in greater need of prayer, than we do at this day. You were formerly bespoke from that very pertinent text, Zech. viii. 21. "The inhabitants of one city shall go to another, saying, Let us go speedily to pray before the Lord, or (as the marginal reading, more expressive of the original reading, is,) continually, from day to day, to entreat the face of the Lord." According to this excellent pattern, we of this city, the metropolis of our land, think ourselves obliged to call upon our brethren in Great-Britain and Ireland, at a time when our hearts cannot but meditate terror, and our flesh tremble for fear of God, and are afraid of his righteous judgments: those past being for the most part forgotten; and the signs of the times foreboding evil to come, being by the generality little, if at all, regarded: we cannot therefore but renew our earnest request, that all who make conscience of praying for the peace of Jerusalem, who wish well to Zion, who would have us and our posterity a nation of British Protestants, and not of popish bigots and French slaves, would give us (as far as real and not pretended necessity will give leave) a meeting at the throne of grace, at the hour mentioned; there to wrestle with God, for turning away his anger from us, for our deliverance from the hands of his and our enemies, for turning the councils of all Ahitophels at home and abroad, into foolishness; for mercy to the queen and kingdom; for a happy peace, or successful war, so long as the matter shall continue undetermined; for securing the

Protestant succession in the illustrious house of Hanover (by good and evil wishes to which, the friends and enemies of our religion and civil rights, are so essentially distinguished,) and especially for the influences of divine grace upon the rising generation, particularly the seed of the righteous, that the offspring of our christian heroes may never be the plague of our church and country. And we desire that this solemn prayer be begun the first Tuesday after sight, and continued at least the summer of this present year 1712. And we think, every modest, reasonable and just request, such as this, should not on any account be denied us; since we are not laying a burden on others, to which we will not most willingly put our own shoulders; nay, indeed, count it much more a blessing than a burden. We hope this will not be esteemed by serious Protestants, of any denomination, a needless step; much less do we fear being censured by any such, as fanciful and melancholy, on account of such a proposal. We with them believe a Providence, know and acknowledge that our God is a God hearing prayer. Scripture recordeth, and our age is not barren of instances of God's working marvellous deliverances for his people in answer to humble, believing and importunate prayer; especially when prayer and reformation go together; which is what we desire.—Let this counsel be acceptable to us, in this day of the church's calamity, and our common fears. Let us seek the Lord while he may be found, and call upon him while he is near. Let us humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God. Let us go and pray unto our God, and he will hearken unto us. We shall seek him and find him, when we search for him with all our hearts. Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: they shall prosper that love her. And may Zion's friends and enemies both cry out with wonder, when they see the work of God; Behold they pray!—What hath God wrought! Verily there is a God that judgeth in the earth."

"*Postscript*. It is desired and hoped, that if any are hindered from attending this work at the above-mentioned hour, they will nevertheless set apart an hour weekly for it."

God speedily and wonderfully heard, and answered those who were united in that extraordinary prayer, in suddenly scattering those black clouds which threatened the nation and the protestant interest with ruin, at that time; in bringing about, in so remarkable a manner, that happy change in the state of affairs in the nation, which was after the queen's death, by bringing in King George the First, just at the time when the enemies of the religion and liberties of the nation had ripened their designs to be put in speedy execution. And we see in the beginning of this extract, that what is proposed, is mentioned as being no new thing, but that God's people

in Great Britain had *formerly* been called upon to do the like duty, and had complied, not without *success.* Such agreements have several times been proposed in Scotland, before this which is now proposed to us; there was a proposal published for this very practice, in the year 1732, and another in 1735. So that it appears this objection of *novelty* is built on a mistake.

SECT. VI.

Concluding Considerations.

Now, upon the whole, I desire every serious christian who may read this discourse, calmly and deliberately to consider, whether he can excuse himself from complying with what has been proposed to us, and requested of us, by those ministers of Christ in Scotland, who are the authors of the late memorial. God has stirred up a part of his church, in a distant part of the world, to be in an extraordinary manner seeking and crying to him, that he would appear to favour Zion, as he has promised. And they are applying themselves to us, to join with them; and make that very proposal to us, which is spoken of in my text, and in like manner and circumstances. The members of one church in one country, are coming to others in distant countries, saying, "Let us go speedily and constantly to pray before the Lord, and to seek the Lord of Hosts." Will it not become us readily to say, "I will go also?" What these servants of Christ ask of us is not silver or gold, or any of our outward substance, or that we would put ourselves to any cost, or do any thing that will be likely to expose us to any remarkable trouble, difficulty or suffering in our outward interest; but only that we would help together with them, by our prayers to God, for the greatest mercy in the world; a mercy which as much concerns us as them; for the glory of their Lord and ours; for the great advancement of our common interest and happiness, and the happiness of our fellow-creatures through all nations; a mercy, of which, at this day especially, there is great need; a mercy, which we, in this land, do stand in particular need of; a mercy, which the word of God requires us to make the subject matter of our prayers above all other mercies, and gives us more encouragement to pray earnestly and unitedly to him for, than any other mercy; and a mercy, which the providence of God towards the world of mankind, at this day loudly calls the people of God to pray for. I think we cannot reasonably doubt but that these ministers have acted a part becoming disciples of the great Messiah, and ministers of his kingdom; and have

done the will of God, according to his word, in setting forward such an affair at this day, and in proposing it to us. And therefore, I desire it may be considered, whether we shall not really sin against God, in refusing to comply with their proposal and request, or in neglecting it, and turning it by with but little notice and attention; therein disregarding that which is truly a call of God to us.

The ministers that make this proposal to us, are no separatists or schismatics; are no promoters of public disorders, nor of any wildness or extravagance in matters of religion; but are quiet, peaceable members and ministers of the church of Scotland, who have lamented the late breaches and divisions of that church. If any shall say, they cannot judge of their character, but must take it on trust from others, because they conceal their names. In anwer to this, I would say—That I presume no sober person will say that he has any reason to suspect them to be any other than gentlemen of honest intention. Be assured, there is no appearance of any thing else but an upright design in their proposal; and that they have not mentioned their names, is an argument of it. It may well be presumed, from the manner of their expressing themselves in the memorial itself, they concealed their names from what perhaps may be called an excess of modesty; choosing to be at the greatest distance from appearing to set forth themselves to the view of the world, as the heads of a great affair, and the first projectors and movers of something extraordinary. And therefore, they are careful to tell us, that they do not propose the affair, but as a thing already set on foot; and do not tell us who first projected it. The proposal is made to us in a very proper and prudent manner, with all appearance of christian modesty and sincerity, and with a very prudent guard against any thing that looks like superstition, or whatsoever might entangle a tender conscience. Far from any appearance of design to promote a particular party, or denomination of christians, in opposition to others, with all appearance of the contrary, it is their charitable request, that none would by any means conceive of any such thing to be in their view, and that all—of every denomination and opinion concerning the late religious commotions—would join with them in seeking the common interest of the kingdom of Christ—And therefore, I think, none can be in the way of their duty in neglecting a proposal in itself excellent, and which they have reason to think is made with upright intentions, merely because the proposers modestly conceal their names. I do not see how any serious person, who has even an ill opinion of late religious stirs, can have any colour or reason to refuse a compliance with this proposal on that account. The more disorders, extravagances and delusions of the devil have lately

prevailed, the more need have we to pray earnestly to God, for his Holy Spirit, to promote true religion, in opposition to the grand deceiver and all his works. And the more such prayer as is proposed, is answered, the more effectually will all that is contrary to sober and pure religion be extirpated and exploded.

One would think that each who favours the dust of Zion, when he hears that God is stirring up a considerable number of his ministers and people to unite in extraordinary prayer, for the revival of religion and the advancement of his kingdom, should greatly rejoice on this occasion. If we lay to heart the present calamities of the church of Christ, and long for that blessed alteration which God has promised, one would think it should be natural to rejoice at the appearance of something in so dark a day, which is so promising a token. Would not our friends that were lately in captivity in Canada, who earnestly longed for deliverance, have rejoiced to have heard of any thing that seemed to forebode the approach of their redemption ?— And particularly, may we not suppose such of them as were religious persons, would greatly have rejoiced to have understood that there was stirred up in God's people an extraordinary spirit of prayer for their redemption ? I do not know why it would not be as natural for us to rejoice at the like hopeful token of the redemption of Zion, if we made her interest our own, and preferred Jerusalem above our chief joy.

If we are indeed called of God to comply with the proposal now made to us, then let me beseech all who sincerely love the interest of real christianity, notwithstanding any diversity of opinion and former disputes, now to *unite* in this affair with one heart and voice : And " let us go speedily to pray before the Lord." There is no need that one should wait for another. If we can get others our neighbours to join with us, and so can conveniently spend the quarterly seasons with praying societies, this is desirable ; but if not, why should we wholly neglect the duty proposed ? Why should not we perform it by ourselves, uniting in heart and practice, as far as we are able, with those who in distant places are engaged in that duty at that time ?

If it be agreeable to the mind and will of God, that we should comply with the memorial, by praying for the coming of Christ's kingdom, in the manner therein proposed, then doubtless it is the duty of all to comply in that respect also, viz. in endeavouring, as far as in us lies, to promote others joining in such prayer, and to render this union and agreement as extensive as may be. Private christians may have many advantages and opportunities for this ; but especially ministers, inasmuch as they not only are by office overseers of whole congregations of God's people, and their guides in matters of

religion, but ordinarily have a far more extensive acquaintance and influence abroad, than private christians in common have.

And I hope, that such as are convinced it is their duty to comply with and encourage this design, will remember we ought not only to go speedily to pray before the Lord, and to seek his mercy, but also to go constantly. We should unite in our practice these two things which our Saviour unites in his precept, *praying* and *not fainting*. If we should continue some years, and nothing remarkable in Providence should appear as though God heard and answered, we should act very unbecoming believers, if we should therefore begin to be disheartened, and grow dull and slack in seeking of God so great a mercy. It is very apparent from the word of God, that he is wont often to try the faith and patience of his people, when crying to him for some great and important mercy, by withholding the mercy sought for a season; and not only so, but at first to cause an increase of dark appearances. And yet he without fail, at last, succeeds those who continue instant in prayer with all perseverance, and "will not let him go except he blesses." It is now proposed that this extraordinary united prayer should continue for *seven years*, from November 1746.—Perhaps some who appear forward to engage, may begin to think the time *long*, before the seven years are out; and may account it a dull story, to go on for so long a time, praying in this extraordinary method, while all yet continues *dark* without any dawnings of the wished-for light, or appearance in Providence of the near approach of the desired mercy. But let it be considered, whether it will not be a poor business, if our faith and patience is so short-winded, that we cannot be willing to wait upon God for seven years, in a way of taking this little pains, in seeking a mercy so infinitely vast. For my part, I sincerely wish and hope, that there *may not be an end of extraordinary united prayer*, among God's people, for the effusions of the blessed Spirit, when the seven years are ended, but that it will be continued, either in this method, or some other, by a *new agreement*, that will be entered into with greater engagedness, and more abundant alacrity, than this is; and that extraordinary united prayer for such a mercy will be *further propagated and extended*, than it can be expected to be in seven years. But, at the same time, I hope God's people, who unite in this agreement, will see some tokens for good before these seven years are out, they shall give them to see, God has not said to the seed of Jacob, seek ye me in vain; and shall serve greatly to animate and encourage them to *go on in united prayers for the advancement of Christ's kingdom*, with increasing fervency. But whatever our hopes may be in this respect, we must be content to be ignorant of *the*

times and seasons, which the Father hath put in his power; and must be willing that God should answer prayer, and fulfil his own glorious promises, *in his own time;* remembering such instructions, counsels and promises, of the word of God as these, Psal. xxvii. 14. "Wait on the Lord, be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart; wait, I say, on the Lord. Hab. ii. 3, 4. "For the vision is yet for an appointed time; but in the end it shall speak, and not lie: though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry." Micah vii. 7. "I will look unto the Lord, I will wait for the God of my salvation: my God will hear me." Isai. xxv. 8, 9. "God will wipe away tears from off all faces, and the rebuke of his people shall he take away from off all the earth; for the Lord hath spoken it. And it shall be said in that day, Lo, this is our God! we have waited for him, and he will save us: this is *Jehovah!* we have waited for him, we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation." Amen.

THE

DISTINGUISHING MARKS

OF A WORK OF

THE SPIRIT OF GOD,

APPLIED TO THAT

UNCOMMON OPERATION THAT HAS LATELY APPEARED ON THE MINDS OF MANY OF THE PEOPLE OF NEW-ENGLAND:

WITH A

PARTICULAR CONSIDERATION

OF THE

EXTRAORDINARY CIRCUMSTANCES WITH WHICH THIS WORK IS ATTENDED.

Mr. COOPER'S PREFACE

TO THE READER.

There are several *dispensations* or days of grace, which the Church of God has been under from the beginning of time. There is that under the ancient Patriarchs: that under the Law of Moses; and there is that of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, under which we now are. This is the brightest day that ever shone, and exceeds the other for peculiar advantages. To us who are so happy as to live under the Evangelical Dispensation, may those words of our Saviour be directed, which he spake to his disciples, when he was first setting up the Messiah's kingdom in the world, and Gospel-light, and power began to spread abroad: "Blessed are the eyes which see the things that ye see. For I tell you, that many prophets and kings have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them."*

The *Mosaic* Dispensation, though darkened with types and figures, yet far exceeded the former; but the Gospel Dispensation so much exceeds in glory, that it eclipses the glory of the Legal, as the stars disappear when the sun ariseth, and goeth forth in his strength. —And the chief thing that renders the Gospel so glorious is, that it is the ministration of the Spirit. Under the preaching of it, the Holy Spirit was to be poured out in more plentiful measures; not only in miraculous gifts, as in the first times of the Gospel, but in his internal saving operations, accompanying the outward ministry, to produce numerous conversions to Christ, and give spiritual life to souls that were before dead in tresspases and sins, and so prepare them for eternal life. Thus the apostle speaks when he runs a comparison between the Old Testament and the New, the Law of Moses, and the Gospel of Jesus Christ: "For the letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life. But if the ministration of death, written and engraven in stones, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not

* Luke x. 23, 24.

steadfastly behold the face of Moses, for the glory of his countenance, which glory was to be done away; how shall not the ministration of the Spirit be rather glorious?"*

This blessed time of the *Gospel* hath several other denominations, which may raise our esteem and value for it. It is called by the evangelical prophet, "The acceptable year of the Lord."† Or, as it may be read, *the year of liking* or of benevolence, or of the good will of the Lord; because it would be the special period in which he would display his grace and favour, in an extraordinary manner, and deal out spiritual blessings with a full and liberal hand.——It is also styled by our Saviour, the Regeneration,‡ which may refer not only to that glorious restitution of all things, which is looked for at the close of the Christian Dispensation, but to the renewing work of grace in particular souls, carried on from the beginning to the end of it. But few were renewed and sanctified under the former dispensations, compared with the instances of the grace of God in Gospel-times. Such numbers were brought into the Gospel Church when it was first set up, as to give occasion for that pleasing admiring question, which was indeed a prophecy of it,§ "Who are these that fly as a cloud? And as the doves to their windows?" Then the power of the divine Spirit so accompanied the ministry of the word, as that thousands were converted under one sermon.——But notwithstanding this large effusion of the Spirit when Gospel-light first dawned upon the world—that pleasant Spring of religion which then appeared on the face of the earth—there was a gradual withdrawing of his saving light and influences; and so the gospel came to be less successful, and the state of Christianity withered in one place and another.

Indeed, at the time of the *Reformation* from Popery, when Gospel-light broke in upon the Church, and dispelled the clouds of Antichristian darkness that covered it, the power of divine grace so accompanied the preaching of the word, as that it had admirable success in the conversion and edification of souls; and the blessed fruits thereof appeared in the hearts and lives of its professors. That was one of "the days of the Son of man," on which the exalted Redeemer rode forth in his glory and majesty, on the white horse of the pure Gospel, "conquering and to conquer;" and the bow in his hand, like that of Jonathan, returned not empty. But what a dead and barren time has it now been, for a great while, with all the Churches of the Reformation! The golden showers have been restrained; the influences of the Spirit suspended; and the consequence has been, that the Gospel has not had any eminent success. Conversions have been rare and dubious; few sons and daughters have been born to God; and the hearts of Christians not so quickened, warmed and refreshed under the ordinances, as they have been.

That this has been the sad state of religion among us in this land, for many years, (except one or two distinguished places, which have at times been visited with a shower of mercy, while other towns

* 2 Cor. iii. 6, 7, 8. † Isa. lxi. 2. ‡ Matt. xix. 28. § Isa. lx.

and churches have not been rained upon,) will be acknowledged by all who have spiritual senses exercised, as it has been lamented by faithful ministers and serious Christians. Accordingly it has been a constant petition in our public prayers, from Sabbath to Sabbath, "That God would pour out his Spirit upon us, and revive his work in the midst of the years." And besides our annual fast-days appointed by Government, most of the churches have set apart days, wherein to seek the Lord by prayer and fasting, that he would "come and rain down righteousness upon us."

And *now*,—"Behold! the Lord whom we have sought, has suddenly come to his temple." The dispensation of grace we are now under, is certainly such as neither we nor our fathers have seen; and in some circumstances so wonderful, that I believe there has not been the like since the extraordinary pouring out of the Spirit immediately after our Lord's ascension. The apostolical times seem to have returned upon us: such a display has there been of the power and grace of the divine Spirit in the assemblies of his people, and such testimonies has he given to the word of the Gospel.

I remember a remarkable passage of the late Reverend and learned Mr. Howe, which I think it may be worth while to transcribe here. It is in his Discourse concerning the "prosperous state of the Christian Church before the end of time, by a plentiful effusion of the Holy Spirit," page 80. "In such a time," says he, "when the Spirit shall be poured forth plentifully, surely ministers shall have their proportionable share. And when such a time as that shall come, I believe you will hear much other kind of sermons (or they will who shall live to such a time) than you are wont to do now-a-days; souls will surely be dealt with at another rate. It is plain, (says he,) too sadly plain, there is a great retraction of the Spirit of God even from us. We know not how to speak living sense into souls; how to get within you; our words die in our mouths, or drop and die between you and us. We even faint when we speak; long experienced unsuccessfulness makes us despond. We speak not as persons that hope to prevail, that expect to make you serious, heavenly, mindful of God, and to walk more like Christians. The methods of alluring and convincing souls, even that some of us have known, are lost from amongst us in a great part. There have been other ways taken, than we can tell now how to fall upon, for the mollifying of the obdurate, and the awakening of the secure, and the convincing and persuading of the obstinate, and the winning of the disaffected. Surely there will be a large share, that will come even to the part of ministers, when such an effusion of the Spirit shall be, as it is expected; that they shall know how to speak to better purpose, with more compassion, with more seriousness, with more authority and allurement than we now find we can."

Agreeable to the just expectation of this great and excellent man, we have found it in this remarkable day. A number of *preachers* have appeared among us, to whom God has given such a large measure of his Spirit, that we are ready sometimes to apply to them the character given of Barnabas, that "he was a good man, and full

of the Holy Ghost, and of faith."* They preach the gospel of the grace of God from place to place, with uncommon zeal and assiduity. The doctrines they insist on are the doctrines of the Reformation, under the influence whereof the power of godliness so flourished in the last century. The points on which their preaching mainly turns, are those important ones of man's guilt; corruption and importance; supernatural regeneration by the Spirit of God; and free justification by faith in the righteousness of Christ; and the marks of the new birth.—The manner of their preaching is not with the enticing words of man's wisdom; how be it, they speak wisdom among them that are perfect. An ardent love to Christ and souls, warms their breasts, and animates their labours. God has made those his ministers active spirits, a flame of fire in his service; and his word in their mouths has been "as a fire; and as a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces." In most places, where they have laboured, God has evidently wrought with them, and "confirmed the word by signs following." Such a power and presence of God in religious assemblies, has not been known since God set up his sanctuary amongst us. He has indeed "glorified the house of his glory."

This work is truly extraordinary in respect of its *extent*. It is more or less in the several provinces that measure many hundred miles on this continent. "He sendeth forth his commandment on earth; his word runneth very swiftly." It has entered and spread in some of the most populous towns, the chief places of concourse and business. And—blessed be God!—it has visited the seats of learning, both here, and in a neighbouring colony. O may the holy Spirit constantly reside in them both, seize our devoted youth, and form them as polished shafts successfully to fight the Lord's battles against the powers of darkness, when they shall be called out to service!—It is extraordinary also with respect to the *numbers* that have been the subjects of this operation. Stupid sinners have been awakened by hundreds; and the inquiry has been general in some places, "What must I do to be saved?" I verily believe, that in this our metropolis, there were the last winter some thousands under such religious impressions as they never felt before.

The work has been remarkable also for the *various sorts* of persons that have been under its influence.—These have been of *all ages*. Some *elderly* persons have been snatched as brands out of the burning, made monuments of divine mercy, and born to God, though out of due time: as the apostle speaks in his own case.† But here, with us, it has lain mostly among the young. Sprightly youth have been made to bow like willows to the Redeemer's sceptre, and willingly to subscribe with their own hands to the Lord. And out of the mouths of babes, some little children, has God ordained to himself praise, to still the enemy and the avenger.——They have also been of all *ranks* and *degrees*. Some of the great and rich; but more of the low and poor.——Of other countries and nations. Ethiopia has stretched out her hand; Some poor *Negroes* have, I trust, been brought into the glorious liberty of the children of God.—

* Acts xi. 24. † 1 Cor. xv.

Of all *qualities* and *conditions*. The most *ignorant*; the foolish things of the world, babes in knowledge, have been made wise unto salvation, and taught those heavenly truths, which have been hid from the wise and prudent. Some of the *learned* and knowing among men, have had those things revealed to them of the Father in heaven, which flesh and blood do not teach: And of these, some who had gone into the modern notions, and had no other than the polite religion of the present times, have had their prejudices conquered, their carnal reasonings overcome, and their understandings made to bow to gospel mysteries; they now receive the truth as it is in Jesus, and their faith no longer "stands in the wisdom of man, but in the power of God." Some of the most rude and disorderly are become regular in their behaviour, and sober in all things. The gay and airy are become grave and serious.

Some of the *greatest sinners* have appeared to be turned into real saints: Drunkards have become temperate: Fornicators and adulterers of a chaste conversation; swearers and profane persons have learned to fear that glorious and fearful Name, THE LORD THEIR GOD: and carnal worldlings have been made to seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness. Yea, deriders and scoffers at this work and its instruments, have come under its conquering power. Some of this stamp, who have gone to hear the preacher, (as some did Paul—"What will this babbler say?")—have not been able to resist the power and the Spirit with which he spake; have sat trembling under the word, and gone away from it weeping; and afterward did cleave unto the preacher, as Dionysius the Areopagite did unto Paul.* Divers instances of this kind have fallen under my knowledge.

The *virtuous* and civil have been convinced that Morality is not to be relied on for life; and so excited to seek after the new birth and a vital union to Jesus Christ by faith. The *formal* professor likewise has been awakened out of his dead formalities, brought under the power of godliness; taken off from his false rests, and brought to build his hope only on the Mediator's righteousness. At the same time, many of the children of God have been greatly quickened and refreshed; have been awakened out of the sleeping frames they were fallen into, and excited to give diligence to make their calling and election sure; and have had precious, reviving, and sealing times ——Thus extensive and general the divine influence has been at this glorious season.

One thing more is worthy of remark; and this is the *uniformity* of the work. By the accounts I have received in letters, and conversation with ministers and others, who live in different parts of the land where this work is going on, it is the same work that is carried on in one place and another: The method of the Spirit's operation on the minds of the people is the same; though with some variety of circumstances, as is usual at other times: And the particular appearances with which this work is attended, that have not been so common at other times, are also much the same. These are indeed

* Acts xvii. 18, 34.

objected by many against the work: But though conversion is the same work, in the main strokes of it wherever it is wrought; yet it seems reasonable to suppose that at an extraordinary season wherein God is pleased to carry on a work of his grace in a more observable and glorious manner, in a way which he would have to be taken notice of by the world; at such a time, I say, it seems reasonable to suppose, that there may be some particular appearances in the work of conversion, which are not common at other times—when yet there are true conversions wrought—or some circumstances attending the work may be carried to an unusual degree and height.—If it were not thus, the work of the Lord would not be so much regarded and spoken of; and so God would not have so much of the glory of it. Nor would the work itself be like to spread so fast; for God has evidently made use of example and discourse in the carrying of it on.

And as to the *fruits* of this work, (which we have been bid so often to wait for) blessed be God! so far as there has been time for observation, they appear to be abiding. I do not mean that none have lost their impressions, or that there are no instances of hypocrisy and apostacy. Scripture and experience lead us to expect these at such a season. It is to me matter of surprise and thankfulness that as yet there have been no more. But I mean, that a great number of those who have been awakened, are still seeking and striving to enter in at the straight gate. The most of those who have been thought to be converted, continue to give evidence of their being new creatures, and seem to cleave to the Lord with full purpose of heart. To be sure, a new face of things continues in this town: though many circumstances concur to render such a work not so observable here,* as in smaller and distant places. Many things not becoming the profession of the Gospel are in a measure reformed. Taverns, dancing-schools, and such meetings as have been called assemblies, which have always proved unfriendly to serious godliness, are much less frequented. Many have reduced their dress and apparel, so as to make them look more like the followers of the humble Jesus. And it has been both surprising and pleasant to see how some younger people, and of that sex too which is most fond of such vanities, have put off the "bravery of their ornaments," as the effect and indication of their seeking the inward glories of "the King's Daughter." Religion is now much more the subject of conversation at friends' houses, than ever I knew it The doctrines of grace are espoused and relished. Private religious meetings are greatly multiplied.—The public assemblies (especially lectures) are much better attended; and our auditors were never so attentive and serious. There is indeed an extraordinary appetite after the "sincere milk of the word."

It is more than a twelvemonth since an evening lecture was set up in this town: there are now several: two constantly on Tuesday and Friday evenings: when some of our most capacious houses are well filled with hearers, who by their looks and deportment seem

* Boston, in New-England.

to come to hear that their souls might live. An evening in God's courts is now esteemed better than many elsewhere. There is also a great resort to ministers in private. Our hands continue full of work: and many times we have more than we can discourse with distinctly and separately. I have been thus large and particular, that persons at a distance, who are desirous to know the present state of religion here, into whose hands these papers will come, may receive some satisfaction.

And now, can any be at a loss to *what spirit* to ascribe this work? To attribute it as some do, to the devil, is to make the old serpent, like the foolish woman, "who plucked down her house with her hands."* Our Saviour has taught us to argue otherwise in such a case as this. "Every kingdom divided against itself shall not stand. And if Satan cast out Satan, he is divided against himself: How then shall his kingdom stand?"†

That some entertain *prejudices* against this work, and others revile and reproach it, does not make it look less like a work of God: It would else want one mark of its being so; for the spirit of this world, and the spirit which is of God, are contrary the one to the other. I do not wonder that Satan rages, and shews his rage in some that are under his influence, when his kingdom is so shaken, and his subjects desert him by hundreds, I hope by thousands. The prejudices of some, I make no doubt, are owing to the want of opportunity to be rightly informed, and their having received misrepresentations from abroad. Others may be offended, because they have not experienced any thing like such a work in themselves; and if these things be so, they must begin again, and get another foundation laid than that on which they have built: and this is what men are hardly brought to. And others, perhaps, may dislike the present work, because it supports and confirms some principles which they have not yet embraced, and against which such prejudices hang about their minds, as they cannot easily shake off. For it is certain, these fruits do not grow on Arminian ground. I hope none dislike the work because they have not been used as instruments in it. For if we love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity, we shall rejoice to see him increase, though we should decrease. If any are resolutely set to disbelieve this work, to reproach and oppose it, they must be left to the free sovereign power and mercy of God to enlighten and rescue them. These, if they have had opportunity to be rightly informed, I am ready to think, would have been disbelievers and opposers of the miracles and mission of our Saviour, had they lived in his days. The malignity which some of them have discovered, to me approaches near to the unpardonable sin; and they had need beware, lest they indeed sin the sin which is unto death: For as I believe it can be committed in these days, as well as in the days of the apostles, so I think persons are now in more danger of committing it than at other times. At least, let them come under the awe of that word, Psal. xxviii. 5. "Because they regard not the works of the Lord, nor the operation of his hands, he shall destroy them, and not build them up."

* Prov. xiv. 1. † Matth. xii. 25, 26.

But if any are disposed to receive conviction, have a mind open to light, and are really willing to know of the present work whether it be of God, it is with great satisfaction and pleasure I can recommend to them the following sheets; in which they will find the "distinguishing marks" of such a work, as they are to be found in the Holy Scriptures, applied to the uncommon operation that has been on the minds of many in this land. Here the matter is tried by the infallible touchstone of the Holy Scriptures, and is weighed in the balance of the Sanctuary, with great judgment and impartiality.

A performance of this kind is seasonable and necessary; and I desire heartily to bless God, who inclined this his servant to undertake it, and has graciously assisted him in it. The Reverend Author is known to be "a scribe instructed unto the kingdom of heaven;" the place where he has been called to exercise his ministry has been famous for experimental religion; and he has had opportunities to observe this work in many places where it has powerfully appeared, and to converse with numbers that have been the subjects of it. These things qualify him for this undertaking above most. His arguments in favour of the work, are strongly drawn from scripture, reason, and experience: And I shall believe every candid, judicious reader will say, he writes very free from an enthusiastic or a party spirit. The use of human learning is asserted; a methodical way of preaching, the fruit of study as well as prayer, is recommended; and the exercise of charity in judging others pressed and urged: And those things which are esteemed the blemishes, and are like to be the hinderances of the work, are with great faithfulness cautioned and warned against.——Many, I believe, will be thankful for this publication. Those who have already entertained favourable thoughts of this work, will be confirmed by it; and the doubting may be convinced and satisfied. But if there are any who cannot after all see the signatures of a divine hand on the work, it is to be hoped they will be prevailed on to spare their censures, and stop their oppositions, lest "haply they should be found even to fight against God."

I had yet several things to say, which I see I must suppress, or I shall go much beyond the limits of a preface: And I fear I need to ask pardon both of the reader and the publishers for the length I have run already. Only I cannot help expressing my wish, that those who have been conversant in this work, in one place and another, would transmit accounts of it to such a hand as the Reverend Author of this discourse, to be compiled into a narrative, like that of the conversions at Northampton, which was published a few years ago; that so the world may know this surprising dispensation, in the beginning, progress, and various circumstances of it. This, I apprehend, would be for the honour of the Holy Spirit, whose work and office has been treated so reproachfully in the christian world. It would be an open attestation to the divinity of a despised Gospel: And it might have a happy effect on other places, where the sound of this marvellous work would by this means be heard. I cannot but think it would be one of the most useful pieces of Church History the people of God are blessed with. Perhaps it would come the nearest to the Acts of the Apostles of any thing extant; and all the histories in

the world do not come up to that: There we have something as surprising as in the book of Genesis: And a new creation, of another kind, seems to open to our view. But I must forbear.

I will only add my prayer, That the worthy Author of this discourse, may long be continued a burning and shining light in the golden candlestick where Christ has placed him, and from thence diffuse his light through these provinces! That the divine Spirit, whose cause is here espoused, would accompany this and the other valuable publications of his servant, with his powerful influences; that they may promote the Redeemer's interest, serve the ends of vital religion, and so add to the Author's present joy, and future crown!

W. COOPER.

Boston, Nov. 20, 1741.

THE

MARKS OF A WORK OF THE TRUE SPIRIT.

1 John iv. 1.

Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits, whether they are of God, because many false prophets are gone out into the world.

In the apostolic age, there was the greatest outpouring of the Spirit of God that ever was; both as to his extraordinary influences and gifts, and his ordinary operations, in convincing, converting, enlightening, and sanctifying the souls of men. But as the influences of the true Spirit abounded, so counterfeits did also abound: The devil was abundant in mimicking, both the ordinary and extraordinary influences of the Spirit of God, as is manifest by innumerable passages of the apostles' writings. This made it very necessary that the church of Christ should be furnished with some certain rules, distinguishing and clear marks, by which she might proceed safely in judging of the true from the false without danger of being imposed upon. The giving of such rules is the plain design of this chapter, where we have this matter more expressly and fully treated of than any where else in the Bible. The apostle, of set purpose undertakes to supply the church of God with such marks of the true Spirit as may be plain and safe, and well accomodated to use and practice; and that the subject might be clearly and sufficiently handled, he insists upon it throughout the chapter, which makes it wonderful that what is here said is no more taken notice of in this extraordinary day, when there is such an uncommon and extensive operation on the minds of people, such a variety of opinions concerning it, and so much talk about the work of the Spirit.

The apostle's discourse on this subject is introduced by an occasional mention of the indwelling of the Spirit, as the sure evidence of an interest in Christ. "And he that keepeth

mmandments dwelleth in him, and he in him; and hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the spirit which he hath given us." Whence we may infer, that the design of the apostle is not only to give marks whereby to distinguish the true spirit from the false, in his extraordinary gifts of prophecy and miracles, but also in his ordinary influences on the minds of his people, in order to their union to Christ, and being built up in him; which is also manifest from the marks themselves that are given, which we shall hereafter notice.

The words of the text are an introduction to this discourse of the distinguishing signs of the true and false spirit.—Before the apostle proceeds to lay down these signs, he exhorteth Christians, first, against an over credulousness, and a forwardness to admit every specious appearance as the work of a true spirit. "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits, whether they are of God." And second, he shews, that there were many counterfeits, "because many false prophets were gone out into the world." These did not only pretend to have the Spirit of God in his extraordinary gifts of inspiration, but also to be the great friends and favourites of heaven, to be eminently holy persons, and to have much of the ordinary saving, sanctifying influences of the Spirit of God on their hearts. Hence we are to look upon these words as a direction to examine and try their pretences to the Spirit of God, in both these respects.

My design therefore at this time is to shew what are the true, certain and distinguishing evidences of a work of the Spirit of God, by which we may safely proceed in judging of any operation we find in ourselves, or see in others. And here I would observe, that we are to take the *scriptures* as our guide in such cases. This is the great and standing rule which God has given to his church, in order to guide them in things relating to the great concerns of their souls; and it is an infallible and sufficient rule. There are undoubtedly sufficient marks given to guide the church of God in this great affair of judging of spirits, without which it would lie open to woeful delusion, and would be remedilessly exposed to be imposed on and devoured by its enemies. And we need not be afraid to trust these rules. Doubtless that spirit who indited the scriptures, knew how to give us good rules, by which to distinguish his operations from all that is falsely pretended to be from him. And this, as I observed before, the Spirit of God has here done of set purpose, and done it more particularly and fully than any where else: so that in my present discourse I shall go no where else for rules or marks for the trial of spirits, but shall confine myself to those that I find in this chapter.—But before I proceed particularly to speak

to these, I would prepare my way by, FIRST, observing *negatively*, in some instances, what are *not signs* or evidences of a work of the Spirit of God.

SECT. I.

NEGATIVE SIGNS; *or, What are no signs by which we are to judge of a work—and especially, What are no evidences that a work is not from the Spirit of God.*

I. Nothing can be certainly concluded from this, That a work is carried on in a way very unusual and extraordinary; provided the variety or difference be such, as may still be comprehended within the limits of scripture rules. What the church has been used to, is not a rule by which we are to judge; because there may be new and extraordinary works of God, and he has heretofore evidently wrought in an extraordinary manner. He has brought to pass new things, strange works; and has wrought in such a manner as to surprise both men and angels. And as God has done thus in times past, so we have no reason to think but that he will do so still. The prophecies of scripture give us reason to think that God has things to accomplish, which have never yet been seen. No deviation from what has hitherto been usual, let it be never so great, is an argument that a work is not from the Spirit of God, if it be no deviation from his prescribed rule. The Holy Spirit is sovereign in his operation; and we know that he uses a great variety; and we cannot tell how great a variety he may use, within the compass of the rules he himself has fixed. We ought not to limit God, where he has not limited himself.

Therefore it is not reasonable to determine that a work is not from God's Holy Spirit because of the extraordinary degree in which the minds of persons are influenced. If they seem to have an extraordinary conviction of the dreadful nature of sin, and a very uncommon sense of the misery of a Christless condition—or extraordinary views of the certainty and glory of divine things,—and are proportionably moved with very extraordinary affections of fear and sorrow, desire, love, or joy: or if the apparent change be very sudden, and the work be carried on with very unusual swiftness—and the persons affected are very numerous, and many of them are very young, with other unusual circumstances, not infringing upon scripture marks of a work of the Spirit—these things are no argument that the work is not of the Spirit of God.—The extraordinary and unusual degree of influence, and power of operation, if in

its nature it be agreeable to the rules and marks given in scripture, is rather an argument in its favour; for by how much higher the degree which in its nature is agreeable to the rule, so much the more is there of conformity to the rule; and so much the more evident that conformity. When things are in small degrees, though they be really agreeable to the rule, it is not so easily seen whether their nature agrees with the rule.

There is a great aptness in persons to doubt of things that are strange; especially elderly persons, to think that to be right which they have never been used to in their day, and have not heard of in the days of their fathers. But if it be a good argument that a work is not from the Spirit of God, that it is very unusual, then it was so in the apostles' days. The work of the Spirit then, was carried on in a manner that, in very many respects was altogether new; such as never had been seen or heard since the world stood. The work was then carried on with more visible and remarkable power than ever; nor had there been seen before, such mighty and wonderful effects of the Spirit of God in sudden changes, and such great engagedness and zeal in great multitudes—such a sudden alteration in towns, cities and countries; such a swift progress, and vast extent of the work—and many other extraordinary circumstances might be mentioned. The great unusualness of the work surprised the Jews; they knew not what to make of it, but could not believe it to be the work of God; many looked upon the persons that were the subjects of it, as bereft of reason; as you may see in Acts ii. 13. xxvi. 24. and 1 Cor. iv. 10.

And we have reason from scripture prophecy to suppose, that at the commencement of that last and greatest outpouring of the Spirit of God, that is to be in the latter ages of the world, the manner of the work will be very extraordinary, and such as never has yet been seen, so that there shall be occasion then to say, as in Isa. lxvi. 8. "Who hath heard such a thing? Who hath seen such things? Shall the earth be made to bring forth in one day? Shall a nation be born at once? for as soon as Sion travailed, she brought forth her children." It may be reasonably expected that the extraordinary manner of the work then will bear some proportion to the extraordinary events, and that glorious change in the state of the world which God will bring to pass by it.

II. A work is not to be judged of by any effects on the bodies of men; such as tears, trembling, groans, loud outcries, agonies of body, or the failing of bodily strength. The influence persons are under, is not to be judged of one way or other, by such effects on the body; and the reason is, because the scripture nowhere gives us any such rule. We cannot

conclude that persons are under the influence of the true spirit because we see such effects upon their bodies, because this is not given as a mark of the true spirit; nor on the other hand, have we any reason to conclude, from any such outward appearances, that persons are not under the influence of the Spirit of God, because there is no rule of scripture given us to judge of spirits by, that does either expressly or indirectly exclude such effects on the body, nor does reason exclude them. It is easily accounted for from the consideration of the nature of divine and eternal things, and the nature of man, and the laws of the union between soul and body, how a right influence, a true and proper sense of things, should have such effects on the body, even those that are of the most extraordinary kind, such as taking away the bodily strength, or throwing the body into great agonies, and extorting loud outcries. There are none of us but do suppose, and would have been ready at any time to say it, that the misery of hell is doubtless so dreadful, and eternity so vast, that if a person should have a clear apprehension of that misery as it is, it would be more than his feeble frame could bear, and especially if at the same time he saw himself in great danger of it, and to be utterly uncertain whether he should be delivered from it, yea, and to have no security from it one day or hour. If we consider human nature, we must not wonder, that when persons have a great sense of that which is so amazingly dreadful, and also have a great view of their own wickedness and God's anger, that things seem to them to forebode speedy and immediate destruction. We see the nature of man to be such that when he is in danger of some terrible calamity to which he is greatly exposed, he is ready upon every occasion to think, that *now* it is coming.—When persons' hearts are full of fear, in time of war, they are ready to tremble at the shaking of a leaf, and to expect the enemy every minute, and to say within themselves, now I shall be slain. If we should suppose that a person saw himself hanging over a great pit, full of fierce and glowing flames, by a thread that he knew to be very weak, and not sufficient to bear his weight, and knew that multitudes had been in such circumstances before, and that most of them had fallen and perished, and saw nothing within reach, that he could take hold of to save him, what distress would he be in? How ready to think, that *now* the thread was breaking, that now *this minute*, he should be swallowed up in those dreadful flames? And would not he be ready to cry out in such circumstances? How much more those that see themselves in this manner hanging over an infinitely more dreadful pit, or held over it in the hand of God, who at the same time they see to be exceedingly pro-

voked? No wonder that the wrath of God, when manifested but a little to the soul, overbears human strength.

So it may easily be accounted for, that a true sense of the glorious excellency of the Lord Jesus Christ, and of his wonderful dying love, and the exercise of a truly spiritual love and joy, should be such as very much to overcome the bodily strength. We are all ready to own, that no man can see God and live, and that it is but a very small part of that apprehension of the glory and love of Christ, which the saints enjoy in heaven, that our present frame can bear; therefore it is not at all strange that God should sometimes give his saints such foretastes of heaven, as to diminish their bodily strength. If it was not unaccountable that the queen of Sheba fainted, and had her bodily strength taken away, when she came to see the glory of Solomon, much less is it unaccountable that she who is the antitype of the queen of Sheba, (viz.) the Church, that is brought as it were from the utmost ends of the earth, from being an alien, and stranger, far off, in a state of sin and misery, should faint when she comes to see the glory of Christ, who is the antitype of Solomon; and especially will be so in that prosperous, peaceful, glorious kingdom, which he will set up in the world in its latter age.

Some object against such extraordinary appearances, that we have no instances of them recorded in the New Testament, under the extraordinary effusions of the Spirit. Were this allowed, I can see no force in the objection, if neither reason, nor any rule of scripture exclude such things; especially considering what was observed under the foregoing particular. I do not know that we have any express mention in the New Testament of any person's weeping, or groaning, or sighing, through fear of hell, or a sense of God's anger; but is there any body so foolish as from hence to argue, that in whomsoever these things appear, their convictions are not from the Spirit of God? And the reason why we do not argue thus, is, because these are easily accounted for, from what we know of the nature of man, and from what the scriptures inform us in general, concerning the nature of eternal things, and the nature of the convictions of God's Spirit; so that there is no need that any thing should be said in particular concerning these external, circumstantial effects. Nobody supposes that there is any need of express scripture for every external, accidental manifestation of the inward motion of the mind: and though such circumstances are not particularly recorded in sacred history, yet there is a great deal of reason to think, from the general accounts we have, that it could not be otherwise than that such things must be in those days. And there is also reason to think, that such great outpouring of the Spirit was not wholly without those more extraordinary effects on

persons' bodies. The jailer in particular seems to have been an instance of that nature, when he, in the utmost distress, and amazement, came trembling, and fell down before Peter and Silas. His falling down at that time does not seem to be a designed putting himself into a posture of supplication, or humble address to Paul and Silas; for he seems not to have said any thing to them then; but he first brought them out, and then he says to them, Sirs, what must I do to be saved? Acts xvi. 29 and 30. But his falling down seems to be from the same cause as his trembling. The Psalmist gives an account of his crying out aloud, and a great weakening of his body under convictions of conscience, and a sense of the guilt of sin, Psalm xxxii. 3, 4. "When I kept silence my bones waxed old, through my roaring all the day long; for day and night thy hand was heavy upon me: my moisture is turned into the drought of summer." We may at least argue so much from it, that such an effect of conviction of sin may well in some cases be supposed; for if we should suppose any thing of an *auxesis* in the expressions, yet the Psalmist would not represent his case by what would be absurd, and to which no degree of that exercise of mind he spoke of, would have any tendency.—We read of the disciples, Matt. xiv. 26, that when they saw Christ coming to them in the storm, and took him for some terrible enemy, threatening their destruction in that storm, "they cried out for fear." Why then should it be thought strange, that persons should cry out for fear, when God appears to them as a terrible enemy, and they see themselves in great danger of being swallowed up in the bottomless gulph of eternal misery? The spouse, once and again, speaks of herself as overpowered with the love of Christ, so as to weaken her body, and make her faint. Cant. ii. 5. "Stay me with flaggons: comfort me with apples, for I am sick of love." And chap. v. 8, "I charge you, O ye daughters of Jerusalem, if ye find my Beloved, that ye tell him that I am sick of love." From whence we may at least argue, that such an effect may well be supposed to arise from such a cause in the saints in some cases, and that such an effect will sometimes be seen in the Church of Christ.

It is a weak objection, that the impressions of enthusiasts have a great effect on their bodies. That the Quakers used to tremble, is no argument that Saul, afterwards Paul, and the jailer, did not tremble from real convictions of conscience. Indeed, all such objections from effects on the body, let them be greater or less, seem to be exceeding frivolous; they who argue thence, proceed in the dark, they know not what ground they go upon, nor by what rule they judge. The root and course of things is to be looked at, and the nature of the operations and affections are to be inquired into, and examined

by the rule of God's word, and not the motions of the blood and animal spirits.

III. It is no argument that an operation on the minds of people, is not the work of the Spirit of God, that it occasions a great deal of noise about religion. For though true religion be of a contrary nature to that of the Pharisees—which was ostentatious, and delighted to set itself forth to the view of men for their applause—yet such is human nature, that it is morally impossible there should be a great concern, strong affection, and a general engagedness of mind amongst a people, without causing a notable, visible, and open commotion and alteration amongst that people.——Surely, it is no argument that the minds of persons are not under the influence God's Spirit, that they are very much moved: for indeed spiritual and eternal things are so great, and of such infinite concern, that there is a great absurdity in men's being but moderately moved and affected by them; and surely it is no argument that they are not moved by the Spirit of God, that they are affected with these things in some measure as they deserve, or in some proportion to their importance. And when was there ever any such thing since the world stood, as a people in general being greatly affected in any affair whetsoever, without noise or stir? The nature of man will not allow it.

Indeed, Christ says, Luke xvii. 20, "The kingdom of God cometh not with observation." That is, it will not consist in what is outward and visible; it shall not be like earthly kingdoms, set up with outward pomp, in some particular place, which shall be especially the royal city, and seat of the kingdom; as Christ explains himself in the words next following, "Neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you." Not that the kingdom of God shall be set up in the world, on the ruins of Satan's kingdom, without a very observable, great effect; a mighty change in the state of things, to the observation and astonishment of the whole world; for such an effect as this is even held forth in the prophecies of scripture, and is so by Christ himself, in this very place, and even in his own explanation of these forementioned words, ver. 24. "For as the lightning that lighteneth out of one part under heaven, shineth unto another part under heaven, so shall also the Son of man be in his day." This is to distinguish Christ's coming to set up his kingdom, from the coming of false Christs, which he tells us will be in a private manner in the deserts, and in the secret chambers; whereas this event of setting up the kingdom of God, should be open and public, in the sight of the whole world, with clear manifestation. like lightning that

cannot be hid, but glares in every one's eyes, and shines from one side of heaven to the other. And we find, that when Christ's kingdom came, by that remarkable pouring out of the Spirit in the apostles' days, it occasioned a great stir every where. What a mighty opposition was there in Jerusalem, on occasion of that great effusion of the Spirit! And so in Samaria, Antioch, Ephesus, Corinth and other places! The affair filled the world with noise, and gave occasion to some to say of the apostles, that they had turned the world upside down. Acts xvii. 6.

IV. It is no argument that an operation on the minds of a people, is not the work of the Spirit of God, that many who are the subjects of it, have great impressions made on their imaginations. That persons have many impressions on their imaginations, does not prove that they have nothing else. It is easy to be accounted for, that there should be much of this nature amongst a people, where a great multitude of all kinds of constitutions, have their minds engaged with intense thought and strong affections about invisible things; yea, it would be strange if there should not. Such is our nature, that we cannot think of things invisible, without a degree of imagination. I dare appeal to any man, of the greatest powers of mind, whether he is able to fix his thoughts on God, or Christ, or the things of another world, without imaginary ideas attending his meditations? And the more engaged the mind is, and the more intense the contemplation and affection, still the more lively and strong the imaginary idea will ordinarily be; especially when attended with surprise. And this is the case when the mental prospect is very new, and takes strong hold of the passions, as fear or joy; and when the change of the state and views of the mind is sudden, from a contrary extreme, as from that which was extremely dreadful, to that which is extremely ravishing and delightful. And it is no wonder that many persons do not well distinguish between that which is imaginary and that which is intellectual and spiritual; and that they are apt to lay too much weight on the imaginary part, and are most ready to speak of that in the account they give of their experiences, especially persons of less understanding and of distinguishing capacity.

As God has given us such a faculty as the imagination, and so made us that we cannot think of things spiritual and invisible, without some exercise of this faculty; so, it appears to me, that such is our state and nature, that this faculty is really subservient and helpful to the other faculties of the mind, when a proper use is made of it; though oftentimes, when the imagination is too strong, and the other faculties weak, it overbears, and disturbs them in their exercise. It appears to me manifest, in many instances with which I have been

acquainted, that God has really made use of this faculty to truly divine purposes; especially in some that are more ignorant. God seems to condescend to their circumstances, and deal with them as babes; as of old he instructed his Church, whilst in a state of ignorance and minority, by types and outward representations. I can see nothing unreasonable in such a supposition. Let others who have much occasion to deal with souls in spiritual concerns, judge whether experience does not confirm it.

It is no argument that a work is not of the Spirit of God, that some who are the subjects of it have been in a kind of ecstacy, wherein they have been carried beyond themselves, and have had their minds transported into a train of strong and pleasing imaginations, and a kind of visions, as though they were rapt up even to heaven, and there saw glorious sights. I have been acquainted with some such instances, and I see no need of bringing in the help of the devil into the account that we give of these things, nor yet of supposing them to be of the same nature with the visions of the prophets, or St. Paul's rapture into Paradise. Human nature, under these intense exercises and affections, is all that need be brought into the account. If it may be well accounted for, that persons under a true sense of the glorious and wonderful greatness and excellency of divine things, and soul-ravishing views of the beauty and love of Christ, should have the strength of nature overpowered, as I have already shewn that it may; then I think it is not at all strange, that amongst great numbers that are thus affected and overborne, there should be some persons of particular constitutions that should have their imaginations thus affected. The effect is no other than what bears a proportion and analogy to other effects of the strong exercise of their minds. It is no wonder, when the thoughts are so fixed, and the affections so strong—and the whole soul so engaged, ravished, and swallowed up—that all other parts of the body are so affected, as to be deprived of their strength, and the whole frame ready to dissolve. Is it any wonder that, in such a case, the brain in particular (especially in some constitutions) which we know is most especially affected by intense contemplations and exercises of mind, should be so affected, and its strength and spirits should for a season be diverted and taken off from impressions made on the organs of external sense, and be wholly employed in a train of pleasing delightful imaginations, corresponding with the present frame of the mind. Some are ready to interpret such things wrong, and to lay too much weight on them, as prophetical visions, divine revelations, and sometimes significations from heaven of what shall come to pass; which the issue, in some instances I have known, has shewn to be otherwise. But yet, it appears to me that such things are evidently sometimes from the Spirit of

God, though indirectly; that is, their extraordinary frame of mind, and that strong and lively sense of divine things which is the occasion of them, is from his Spirit; and also as the mind continues in its holy frame, and retains a divine sense of the excellency of spiritual things even in its rapture; which holy frame and sense, is from the spirit of God, though the imaginations that attend it are but accidental, and therefore there is commonly something or other in them that is confused, improper and false.

V. It is no sign that a work is not from the Spirit of God, that example is a great means of it. It is surely no argument that an effect is not from God, that means are used in producing it; for we know that it is God's manner to make use of means in carrying on his work in the world, and it is no more an argument against the divinity of an effect, that this means is made use of, than if it was by any other means. It is agreeable to Scripture that persons should be influenced by one another's good example. The Scripture directs us to set good examples to that end, Matth v. 16. 1 Pet. iii. 1. 1 Tim. iv. 12. Titus ii. 7. and also directs us to be influenced by the good examples of others, and to follow them, 2 Cor. viii. 1—7. Heb. vi. 12. Phil. iii. 17. 1 Cor. iv. 16. and chap. xi. 1. 2 Thess. iii. 9. 1 Thess. i. 7. By which it appears, that example is one of God's means; and certainly it is no argument that a work is not of God, that his own means are made use of to effect it.

And as it is a *scriptural* way of carrying on God's work, by example, so it is a *reasonable* way. It is no argument, that men are not influenced by reason, that they are influenced by example. This way of persons holding forth truth to one another, has a tendency to enlighten the mind, and to convince reason. None will deny but that for persons to signify things one to another by words, may rationally be supposed to tend to enlighten each other's minds; but the same thing may be signified by actions, and signified much more fully and effectually. Words are of no use any otherwise than as they convey our own ideas to others; but actions, in some cases, may do it much more fully. There is a language in actions; and in some cases, much more clear and convincing than in words. It is therefore no argument against the goodness of the effect, that persons are greatly affected by seeing others so; yea, though the impression be made only by seeing the tokens of great and extraordinary affection in others in their behaviour, taken for granted what they were affected with, without hearing them say one word. There may be language sufficient in such a case in their behaviour only, to convey their minds to others, and to signify to them their sense of things more than can possibly be done by words only. If a

person should see another under extreme bodily torment, he might receive much clearer ideas, and more convincing evidence of what he suffered, by his actions in misery, than he could do by the words of an unaffected indifferent relator. In like manner he might receive a greater idea of any thing that is excellent and very delightful, from the behaviour of one that is in actual enjoyment, than by the dull narration of one which is inexperienced and insensible himself. I desire that this matter may be examined by the strictest reason. Is it not manifest that effects produced in persons' minds are rational, since not only weak and ignorant people are much influenced by example, but also those that make the greatest boast of strength of reason, are more influenced by reason held forth in this way, than almost any other way. Indeed the religious affections of many when raised by this means, as by hearing the word preached, or any other means, may prove flashy, and soon vanish, as Christ represents the stony ground hearers; but the affections of some thus moved by example are abiding, and prove to be of saving issue."

There never yet was a time of remarkable pouring out of the Spirit, and great revival of religion, but that example had a main hand. So it was at the reformation, and in the apostles' days, in Jerusalem and Samaria, and Ephesus, and other parts of the world, as will be most manifest to any one that attends to the accounts we have in the Acts of the Apostles. As in those days one person was moved by another, so one city or town was influenced by the example of another. 1 Thess. i. 7, 8. "So that ye were ensamples to all that believe in Macedonia and Achaia, for from you sounded out the word of the Lord, not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place your faith to God-ward is spread abroad."

It is no valid objection against examples being so much used, that the scripture speaks of the word as the principal means of carrying on God's work; for the word of God is the principal means, nevertheless, by which other means operate and are made effectual. Even the Sacraments have no effect but by the word; and so it is that example becomes effectual; for all that is visible to the eye is unintelligible and vain without the word of God to instruct and guide the mind. It is the word of God that is indeed held forth and applied by example, as the word of the Lord sounded forth to other towns in Macedonia and Achaia, by the example of those that believed in Thessalonica.

That example should be a great means of propagating the Church of God, seems to be several ways signified in scripture. It is signified by Ruth's following Naomi out of the land of Moab, into the land of Israel, when she resolved that she would not leave her, but would go whither she went, and

would lodge where she lodged; and that Naomi's people should be her people, and Naomi's God, her God. Ruth, who was the ancestral mother of David, and of Christ, was undoubtedly a great type of the church; upon which account her history is inserted in the canon of scripture. In her leaving the land of Moab and its gods, to come and put her trust under the shadow of the wings of the God of Israel, we have a type of the conversion, not only of the Gentile church, but of every sinner, that is naturally an alien and stranger, but in his conversion forgets his own people, and father's house, and becomes a fellow-citizen with the saints and a true Israelite. The same seems to be signified in the effect the example of the spouse, when she was sick of love, has on the daughters of Jerusalem, i. e. visible Christians, who are first awakened, by seeing the spouse in such extraordinary circumstances, and then converted. See Cant. v. 8, 9, and vi. 1. And this is undoubtedly one way that "the Spirit and the Bride say, come." Rev. xxii. 17. i. e. the spirit in the bride. It is foretold, that the work of God should be very much carried on by this means, in the last great outpouring of the Spirit, that should introduce the glorious day of the church, so often spoken of in scripture. Zech. viii. 21—23. "And the inhabitants of one city shall go to another, saying, Let us go speedily to pray before the Lord, and to seek the Lord of Hosts: I will go also. Yea many people, and strong nations, shall come to seek the Lord of Hosts in Jerusalem, and to pray before the Lord. Thus saith the Lord of Hosts: In those days it shall come to pass, that ten men shall take hold, out of all languages of nations, even shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew, saying, We will go with you, for we have heard that God is with you."

VI. It is no sign that a work is not from the Spirit of God, that many, who seem to be the subjects of it, are guilty of great imprudences and irregularities in their conduct. We are to consider that the end for which God pours out his Spirit, is to make men holy, and not to make them politicians.—It is no wonder that, in a mixt multidude of all sorts—wise and unwise, young and old, of weak and strong natural abilities, under strong impressions of mind—there are many who behave themselves imprudently. There are but few that know how to conduct them under vehement affections of any kind, whether of a temporal or spiritual nature; to do so requires a great deal of discretion, strength, and steadiness of mind. A thousand imprudences will not prove a work to be not of the Spirit of God; yea, if there be not only imprudences, but many things prevailing that are irregular, and really contrary to the rules of God's holy word. That it should be thus may

be well accounted for from the exceeding weakness of human nature, together with the remaining darkness and corruption of those that are yet the subjects of the saving influences of God's Spirit, and have a real zeal for God.

We have a remarkable instance, in the New Testament, of a people that partook largely of that great effusion of the Spirit in the apostle's days, among whom there nevertheless abounded imprudences and great irregularities: viz. the church at Corinth. There is scarcely any church more celebrated in the New Testament for being blessed with large measures of the Spirit of God, both in his ordinary influences, in convincing and converting sinners, and also in his extraordinary and miraculous gifts; yet what manifold imprudences, great and sinful irregularities, and strange confusion, did they run into, at the Lord's Supper, and in the exercise of church discipline! To which may be added, their indecent manner of attending other parts of public worship, their jarring and contention about their teachers, and even the exercise of their extraordinary gifts of prophecy, speaking with tongues, and the like, wherein they spake and acted by the immediate inspiration of the Spirit of God.

And if we see great imprudences, and even sinful irregularities, in some who are great instruments to carry on the work, it will not prove it not to be the work of God. The apostle Peter himself, who was a great, eminently holy, and inspired apostle—and one of the chief instruments of setting up the Christian church in the world—when he was actually engaged in this work, was guilty of a great and sinful error in his conduct; of which the apostle Paul speaks, Gal. ii. 11, 12, 13. "But when Peter was come to Antioch, I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed: for before that certain came from James, he did eat with the Gentiles; but when they were come, he withdrew, and separated himself, fearing them that were of the circumcision: and the other Jews dissembled likewise with him; insomuch, that Barnabas also was carried away with their dissimulation." If a great pillar of the Christian church—one of the chief of those who are the very foundations on which, next to Christ, the whole church is said to be built—was guilty of such an irregularity; is it any wonder if other lesser instruments, who have not that extraordinary conduct of the divine Spirit he had, should be guilty of many irregularities?

And in particular, it is no evidence that a work is not of God, if many who are either the subjects or the instruments of it, are guilty of too great forwardness to censure others as unconverted. For this may be through mistakes they have embraced concerning the marks by which they are to judge o the hypocrisy and carnality of others: or from not duly appre

hending the latitude the Spirit of God uses in the methods of his operations; or, from want of making due allowance for that infirmity and corruption that may be left in the hearts of the saints; as well as through want of a due sense of their own blindness and weakness, and remaining corruption, whereby spiritual pride may have a secret vent this way, under some disguise, and not be discovered. If we allow that truly pious men may have a great deal of remaining blindness and corruption, and may be liable to mistakes about the marks of hypocrisy, as undoubtedly all will allow, then it is not unaccountable that they should sometimes run into such errors as these. It is as easy, and upon some accounts more easy to be accounted for, why the remaining corruption of good men should sometimes have an unobserved vent this way, than most other ways; and without doubt (however lamentable) many holy men have erred in this way.

Lukewarmness in religion is abominable, and zeal an excellent grace; yet above all other Christian virtues, this needs to be strictly watched and searched; for it is that with which corruption, and particularly pride and human passion, is exceedingly apt to mix unobserved. And it is observable, that there never was a time of great reformation, to cause a revival of zeal in the church of God, but that it has been attended, in some notable instances, with irregularity, and a running out some way or other into an undue severity. Thus in the apostles' days, a great deal of zeal was spent about unclean meats, with heat of spirit in Christians one against another, both parties condemning and censuring one another, as not true Christians; when the apostle had charity for both, as influenced by a spirit of real piety: "He that eats," says he, "to the Lord he eats, and giveth God thanks; and he that eateth not, to the Lord he eateth not, and givet God thanks." So in the church of Corinth, they had got into a way of extolling some ministers, and censuring others, and were puffed up one against another: but yet these things were no sign that the work then so wonderfully carried on, was not the work of God. And after this, when religion was still greatly flourishing in the world, and a spirit of eminent holiness and zeal prevailed in the Christian church, the zeal of Christians ran out into a very improper and undue severity, in the exercise of church discipline towards delinquents. In some cases they would by no means admit them into their charity and communion, though they appeared never so humble and penitent. And in the days of Constantine the Great, the zeal of Christians against heathenism run out into a degree of persecution. So in that glorious revival of religion, at the reformation, zeal in many instances appeared in a very improper severity, and even a degree of per-

secution ; yea, in some of the most eminent reformers ; as in the great Calvin in particular. And many in those days of the flourishing of vital religion, were guilty of severely censuring others that differed from them in opinion in some points of divinity.

VII. Nor are many errors in judgment, and some delusions of Satan intermixed with the work, any argument that the work in general is not of the Spirit of God. However great a spiritual influence may be, it is not to be expected that the Spirit of God should be given now in the same manner as to the apostles, infallibly to guide them in points of Christian doctrine, so that what they taught might be relied on as a rule to the Christian church. And if many delusions of Satan appear, at the same time that a great religious concern prevails, it is not an argument that the work in general is not the work of God, any more than it was an argument in Egypt, that there were no true miracles wrought there, by the hand of God, because Jannes and Jambres wrought false miracles at the same time by the hand of the devil. Yea the same persons may be the subjects of much of the influences of the Spirit of God, and yet in some things be led away by the delusions of Satan, and this be no more of paradox than many other things that are true of real saints, in the present state, where grace dwells with so much corruption, and the new man and the old man subsist together in the same person ; and the kingdom of God, and the kingdom of the devil remain for a while together in the same heart. Many godly persons have undoubtedly in this and other ages, exposed themselves to woeful delusions, by an aptness to lay too much weight on impulses and impressions, as if they were immediate revelations from God, to signify something future, or to direct them where to go, and what to do.

VIII. If some, who were thought to be wrought upon, fall away into gross errors, or scandalous practices, it is no argument that the work in general is not the work of the Spirit of God. That there are some counterfeits, is no argument that nothing is true : such things are always expected in a time of reformation. If we look into church history, we shall find no instance of any great revival of religion, but what has been attended with many such things. Instances of this nature in the apostles' days were innumerable ; some fell away into gross heresies, others into vile practices, though they seemed to be the subjects of a work of the Spirit—and were accepted for a while amongst those that were truly so, as their brethren and companions—and were not suspected till they went out from them. And some of these were teachers and officers—and eminent persons in the Christian church—whom God had

endowed with miraculous gifts of the Holy Ghost; as appears by the beginning of the 6th chapter of the Hebrews. An instance of these was Judas, who was one of the twelve apostles, and had long been constantly united to, and intimately conversant with a company of truly experienced disciples, without being discovered or suspected, till he discovered himself by his scandalous practice. He had been treated by Jesus himself, in all external things, as if he had truly been a disciple, even investing him with the character of apostle, sending him forth to preach the gospel, and enduing him with miraculous gifts of the Spirit. For though Christ knew him, yet he did not then clothe himself with the character of omniscient Judge, and searcher of hearts, but acted the part of a minister of the visible church, (for he was his Father's minister;) and therefore rejected him not, till he had discovered himself by his scandalous practice; thereby giving an example to guides and rulers of the visible church, not to take it upon them to act the part of searcher of hearts, but to be influenced in their administrations by what is visible and open.—There were some instances then of such apostates as were esteemed eminently full of the grace of God's Spirit. An instance of this nature probably was Nicolas, one of the seven deacons, who was looked upon by the christians in Jerusalem, in the time of that extraordinary pouring out of the Spirit, as a man full of the Holy Ghost, and was chosen out of the multitude of Christians to that office, for that reason; as you may see in Acts vi. 3, 5; yet he afterwards fell away, and became the head of a sect of vile heretics, of gross practices, called from his name the sect of the Nicolaitanes,* Rev. ii. 6, and 15.

So in the time of the reformation from Popery, how great was the number of those who for a while seemed to join with the reformers, yet fell away into the grossest and most absurd errors, and abominable practices. And it is particularly observable, that in times of great pouring out of the Spirit to revive religion in the world, a number of those who for a while seemed to partake in it, have fallen off into whimsical and extravagant errors, and gross enthusiasm, boasting of high degrees of spirituality and perfection, censuring and condemning others as carnal. Thus it was with the Gnostics in the apostles' times; and thus it was with several sects at the reformation, as Anthony Burgess observes in his book called Spiritual Refinings, Part I. Serm. 23. p. 132. "The first worthy reformers, and glorious instruments of God, found a bitter conflict herein, so that they were exercised not only

* But though these heretics assumed his name, it does not follow that he countenanced their enormities.—See Calmet's Dict. Nicolas.

with formalists, and traditionary Papists on the one side, but men that pretended themselves to be more enlightened than the reformers were on the other side: Hence they called those that did adhere to the scripture, and would try revelations by it, Literists and Vowelists, as men acquainted with the words and vowels of the scripture, having nothing of the Spirit of God: And wheresoever in any town, the true doctrine of the gospel brake forth to the displacing of Popery, presently such opinions arose, like tares that came up among the good wheat; whereby great divisions were raised, and the reformation made abominable and odious to the world; as if that had been the sun to give heat and warmth to those worms and serpents to crawl out of the ground. Hence they inveighed against LUTHER, and said he had only promulgated a carnal gospel."—Some of the leaders of those wild enthusiasts, had been for a while highly esteemed by the first reformers, and peculiarly dear to them.—Thus also in England, at the time when vital religion much prevailed in the days of King Charles I. the interregnum, and Oliver Cromwell, such things as these abounded. And so in New England, in her purest days, when vital piety flourished, such kind of things as these broke out. Therefore the devil's sowing such tares is no proof that a true work of the Spirit of God is not gloriously carried on.

IX. It is no argument that a work is not from the Spirit of God, that it seems to be promoted by ministers insisting very much on the terrors of God's holy law, and that with a great deal of pathos and earnestness. If there be really a hell of such dreadful, and never-ending torments, as is generally supposed, of which multitudes are in great danger--and into which the greater part of men in Christian countries do actually from generation to generation fall, for want of a sense of its terribleness, and so for want of taking due care to avoid it—then why is it not proper for those who have the care of souls to take great pains to make men sensible of it? Why should they not be told as much of the truth as can be? If I am in danger of going to hell, I should be glad to know as much as I possibly can of the dreadfulness of it. If I am very prone to neglect due care to avoid it, he does me the best kindness, who does most to represent to me the truth of the case, that sets forth my misery and danger in the liveliest manner.

I appeal to every one, whether this is not the very course they would take in case of exposedness to any great temporal calamity? If any of you who are heads of families saw one of your children in a house all on fire, and in imminent danger of being soon consumed in the flames, yet seemed to be very insensible of its danger, and neglected to escape after you

had often called to it—would you go on to speak to it only in a cold and indifferent manner? Would not you cry aloud, and call earnestly to it, and represent the danger it was in, and its own folly in delaying, in the most lively manner of which you was capable? Would not nature itself teach this, and oblige you to it? If you should continue to speak to it only in a cold manner, as you are wont to do in ordinary conversation about indifferent matters, would not those about you begin to think you were bereft of reason yourself? This is not the way of mankind in temporal affairs of great moment, that require earnest heed and great haste, and about which they are greatly concerned. They are not wont to speak to others of their danger, and warn them but a little; or in a cold and indifferent manner. Nature teaches men otherwise. If we who have the care of souls, knew what hell was, had seen the state of the damned, or by any other means had become sensible how dreadful their case was—and at the same time knew that the greater part of men went thither, and saw our hearers not sensible of their danger—it would be morally impossible for us to avoid most earnestly setting before them the dreadfulness of that misery, and their great exposedness to it, and even to cry aloud to them.

When ministers preach of hell, and warn sinners to avoid it in a cold manner—though they may say in words, that it is infinitely terrible—they contradict themselves. For actions, as I observed before, have a language as well as words. If a preacher's words represent the sinner's state as infinitely dreadful, while his behaviour and manner of speaking contradict it—shewing that the preacher does not think so—he defeats his own purpose; for the language of his actions, in such a case, is much more effectual than the bare signification of his words. Not that I think that the law only should be preached: ministers may preach other things too little. The gospel is to be preached as well as the law, and the law is to be preached only to make way for the gospel, and in order that it may be preached more effectually. The main work of ministers is to preach the gospel: "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness." So that a minister would miss it very much if he should insist so much on the terrors of the law, as to forget his Lord, and neglect to preach the gospel; but yet the law is very much to be insisted on, and the preaching of the gospel is like to be in vain without it.

And certainly such earnestness and affection in speaking is beautiful, as becomes the nature and importance of the subject. Not but that there may be such a thing as an indecent boisterousness in a preacher, something besides what naturally arises from the nature of his subject, and in which the matter and manner do not well agree together. Some talk of

of it as an unreasonable thing to fright persons to heaven; but I think it is a reasonable thing to endeavour to fright persons away from hell. They stand upon its brink, and are just ready to fall into it, and are senseless of their danger. Is it not a reasonable thing to fright a person out of a house on fire? The word *fright* is commonly used for sudden, causeless fear, or groundless surprise; but surely a just fear, for which there is good reason, is not to be spoken against under any such name.

SECT. II.

What are distinguishing Scripture Evidences of a Work of the Spirit of God?

Having shewn, in some instances, what are not evidences that a work wrought among a people, is not a work of the Spirit of God, I now proceed, in the second place, as was proposed, to shew positively what are the sure, distinguishing scripture evidences and marks of a work of the Spirit of God, by which we may proceed in judging of any operation we find in ourselves or see among a people without danger of being misled. And in this, as I said before, I shall confine myself wholly to those marks which are given us by the apostle in the chapter wherein is my text, where this matter is particularly handled, and more plainly and fully than any where else in the Bible. And in speaking to these marks, I shall take them in the order in which I find them in the chapter.

I. When the operation is such as to raise their esteem of that Jesus who was born of the Virgin, and was crucified without the gates of Jerusalem; and seems more to confirm and establish their minds in the truth of what the gospel declares to us of his being the Son of God, and the Saviour of men; is a sure sign that it is from the Spirit of God. This sign the apostle gives us in the 2d and 3d verses: "Hereby know ye the Spirit of God; and every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God; and every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God." This implies a confessing not only that there was such a person who appeared in Palestine, and did and suffered those things that are recorded of him, but that he was Christ, i. e. the Son of God, anointed to be Lord and Saviour, as the name Jesus Christ implies. That thus much is implied in the apostle's meaning, is confirmed by the 15th verse, where the apostle is still on the same subject of signs of the true spirit: "Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the

Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God." And it is to be observed that the word *confess*, as it is often used in the New Testament, signifies more than merely *allowing:* it implies an establishing and confirming of a thing by testimony, and declaring it with manifestation of esteem and affection; so Matt. x. 32. "Whosoever therefore shall *confess* me before men, him will I *confess* also before my Father which is in heaven." Rom. xv. 9. "I will confess to thee among the Gentiles, and sing unto thy name." And Phil. ii. 11. "That every tongue shall *confess* that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." And that this is the force of the expression, as the apostle John uses it in the place, is confirmed in the next chapter, ver. 1. "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God; and every one that loveth him that begat, loveth him also that is begotten of him." And by that parallel place of the apostle Paul, where we have the same rule given to distinguish the true spirit from all counterfeits, 1 Cor. xii. 3. "Wherefore I give you to understand that no man speaking by the Spirit of God, called Jesus accursed, (or will shew an ill or mean esteem of him;) and that no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost."

So that if the spirit that is at work among a people is plainly observed to work so as to convince them of Christ, and lead them to him—to confirm their minds in the belief of the history of Christ as he appeared in the flesh—and that he is the Son of God, and was sent of God to save sinners; that he is the only Saviour, and that they stand in great need of him; and if he seems to beget in them higher and more honourable thoughts of him than they used to have, and to incline their affections more to him; it is a sure sign that it is the true and right spirit; however incapable we may be to determine, whether that conviction and affection be in that manner, or to that degree, as to be saving or not.

But the words of the apostle are remarkable; the person to whom the Spirit gives testimony, and for whom he raises their esteem, must be that Jesus who appeared in the flesh, and not another Christ in his stead; nor any mystical, fantastical Christ; such as the light within. This the spirit of Quakers extols, while it diminishes their esteem of and dependence upon an outward Christ—or Jesus as he came in the flesh—and leads them off from him; but the spirit that gives testimony for that Jesus, and leads to him, can be no other than the spirit of God.

The devil has the most bitter and implacable enmity against that person, especially in his character of the Saviour of men; he mortally hates the story and doctrine of his redemption; he never would go about to beget in men more honourable thoughts of him, and lay greater weight on his

instructions and commands. The spirit that inclines men's hearts to the seed of the woman, is not the spirit of the serpent that has such an irreconcilable enmity against him. He that heightens men's esteem of the glorious Michael, that prince of the angels, is not the spirit of the dragon that is at war with him.

II. When the spirit that is at work operates against the interests of Satan's kingdom, which lies in encouraging and establishing sin, and cherishing men's worldly lusts; this is a sure sign that it is a true, and not a false spirit. This sign we have given us in the 4th and 5th verses. "Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them; because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world. They are of the world, therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them." Here is a plain antithesis: it is evident that the apostle is still comparing those that are influenced by the two opposite kinds of spirits, the true and the false, and shewing the difference; the one is of God, and overcomes the spirit of the world; the other is of the world, and speaks and savours of the things of the world. The spirit of the devil is here called, "he that is in the world." Christ says, "My kingdom is not of this world." But it is otherwise with Satan's kingdom; he is "the god of this world."

What the apostle means by *the world*, or "the things that are of the world," we learn by his own words, in the 2d chapter of this epistle, 15th and 16th verses. "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world: if any man love the world, the love of the Father ir not in him; for all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world." So that by the world the apostle evidently means every thing that appertains to the interest of sin, and comprehends all the corruptions and lusts of men, and all those acts and objects by which they are gratified.

So that we may safely determine, from what the apostle says, that the spirit that is at work amongst a people, after such a manner, as to lessen men's esteem of the pleasures, profits, and honours of the world, and to take off their hearts from an eager pursuit after these things; and to engage them in a deep concern about a future and eternal happiness which the gospel reveals—and puts them upon earnestly seeking the kingdom of God and his righteousness; and the spirit that convinces them of the dreadfulness of sin, the guilt it brings, and the misery to which it exposes, must needs be the spirit of God.

It is not to be supposed that Satan would convince men of sin, and awaken the conscience: it can no way serve his

end, to make that candle of the Lord shine the brighter, and to open the mouth of that vicegerent of God in the soul. It is for his interest, whatever he does, to lull conscience asleep, and keep it quiet. To have that, with its eyes and mouth open in the soul, will tend to clog and hinder all his designs of darkness, and evermore to disturb his affairs, to cross his interest, and disquiet him, so that he can manage nothing to his mind without molestation. Would the devil, when he is about to establish men in sin, take such a course, in the first place, to enlighten and awaken the conscience to see the dreadfulness of sin, and make them exceedingly afraid of it, and sensible of their misery by reason of their past sins; and their great need of deliverance from their guilt? Would he make them more careful, inquisitive, and watchful to discern what is sinful; and to avoid future sins; and so more afraid of the devil's temptations, and more careful to guard against them? What do those men do with their reason, that suppose that the spirit that operates thus, is the spirit of the devil?

Possibly some may say, that the devil may even awaken men's consciences to deceive them, and make them think they have been the subjects of a saving work of the Spirit of God, while they are indeed still in the gall of bitterness. But to this it may be replied, that the man who has an awakened conscience, is the least likely to be deceived of any man in the world; it is the drowsy, insensible, stupid conscience, that is most easily blinded. The more sensible conscience is in a diseased soul, the less easily is it quieted without a real healing. The more sensible conscience is made of the dreadfulness of sin, and of the greatness of a man's own guilt, the less likely is he to rest in his own righteousness, or to be pacified with nothing but shadows. A man that has been thoroughly terrified with a sense of his own danger and misery, is not easily flattered and made to believe himself safe, without any good grounds.—To awaken conscience, and convince it of the evil of sin, cannot tend to establish it, but certainly tends to make way for sin and Satan's being cut out. Therefore, this is a good argument that the spirit that operates thus, cannot be the spirit of the devil; except we suppose that Christ knew not how to argue, who told the Pharisees—who supposed that the spirit by which he wrought, was the spirit of the devil—*that Satan would not cast out Satan*, Matt. xii. 25, 26.—And therefore, if we see persons made sensible of the dreadful nature of sin, and of the displeasure of God against it; of their own miserable condition as they are in themselves, by reason of sin, and earnestly concerned for their eternal salvation---and sensible of their need of God's pity and help, and engaged to seek it in the use of the means that God has appointed—we may certainly conclude that it is from the Spirit of God, whatever effects

this concern has on their bodies; though it cause them to cry out aloud, or to shriek, or to faint; or, though it throw them into convulsions, or whatever other way the blood and spirits are moved.

The influence of the Spirit of God is yet more abundantly manifest, if persons have their hearts *drawn off* from the world, and weaned from the objects of their wordly lusts, and taken off from worldly pursuits, by the sense they have of the excellency of divine things, and the affection they have to those spiritual enjoyments of another world, that are promised in the gospel.

III. The spirit that operates in such a manner, as to cause in men a greater regard to the holy Scriptures, and establishes them more in their truth and divinity, is certainly the Spirit of God. This rule the apostle gives us in the 6th verse: "We are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us: hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error." *We are of God;* that is, "We the apostles, are sent forth of God, and appointed by him to teach the world, and to deliver those doctrines and instructions, which are to be their rule; *he that knoweth God, heareth us,*" &c.——The apostle's argument here equally reaches all that in the same sense are *of God;* that is, all those that God has appointed and inspired to deliver to his church its rule of faith and practice; all the prophets and apostles, whose doctrine God has made the foundation on which he has built his church, as in Eph. ii. 20; in a word, all the penmen of the holy Scriptures. The devil never would attempt to beget in persons a regard to that divine word which God has given to be the great and standing rule for the direction of his church in all religious matters, and all concerns of their souls, in all ages. A spirit of delusion will not incline persons to seek direction at the mouth of God. To the law and to the testimony, is never the cry of those evil spirits that have no light in them; for it is God's own direction to discover their delusions. Isa. viii. 19, 20. "And when they shall say unto you, Seek unto them that have familiar spirits, and unto wizards that peep, and that mutter: should not a people seek unto their God? for the living to the dead? To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." The devil does not say the same as Abraham did, "They have Moses and the prophets, let them hear them:" nor the same that the voice from heaven did concerning Christ, "Hear ye him." Would the spirit of error, in order to deceive men, beget in them a high opinion of the infallible rule, and incline them to think much of it, and be very conversant with it? Would the prince of darkness, in order to promote his kingdom of

darkness, lead men to the sun? The devil has ever shewn a mortal spite and hatred towards that holy book the Bible: he has done all in his power to extinguish that light; and to draw men off from it: he knows it to be that light by which his kingdom of darkness is to be overthrown. He has had for many ages experience of its power to defeat his purposes, and baffle his designs: it is his constant plague. It is the main weapon which Michael uses in his war with him: it is the sword of the Spirit that pierces him and conquers him. It is that great and strong sword, with which God punishes Leviathan, that crooked serpent. It is that sharp sword that we read of, Rev. xix. 15. that proceeds out of the mouth of him that sat on the horse, with which he smites his enemies. Every text is a dart to torment the old serpent. He has felt the stinging smart thousands of time: therefore he is engaged against the Bible, and hates every word in it; and we may be sure that he never will attempt to raise persons' esteem of it, or affection to it. And accordingly we see it common in enthusiasts, that they depreciate this written rule, and set up the light within or some other rule above it.

IV. Another rule to judge of spirits may be drawn from those compellations given to the opposite spirits, in the last words of the 6th verse, "The spirit of truth and the spirit of error." These words exhibit the two opposite characters of the Spirit of God, and other spirits that counterfeit his operations. And therefore, if by observing the manner of the operation of a spirit that is at work among a people, we see that it operates as a spirit of truth, leading persons to truth, convincing them of those things that are true, we may safely determine that it is a right and true spirit. For instance, if we observe that the spirit at work makes men more sensible than they used to be, that there is a God, and that he is a great and a sin-hating God; that life is short, and very uncertain; and that there is another world; that they have immortal souls, and must give account of themselves to God; that they are exceeding sinful by nature and practice; that they are helpless in themselves: and confirms them in other things that are agreeable to some sound doctrine: the spirit that works thus, operates as a spirit of truth; he represents things as they truly are. He brings men to the light for whatever makes truth manifest is light; as the apostle Paul observes, Eph. v. 13. "But all things that are reproved, (or discovered, as it is in the margin,) are made manifest by the light; for whatsoever doth make manifest is light." And therefore we may conclude, that it is not the spirit of darkness that doth thus discover, and make manifest the truth. Christ tells us that Satan is a liar, and the father of lies; and his kingdom,

is a kingdom of darkness. It is upheld and promoted only by darkness and error. Satan has all his power and dominion by darkness. Hence we read of the power of darkness, Luke xxii. 53. and Col. i. 13. And devils are called "the rulers of the darkness of this world." Whatever spirit removes our darkness, and brings us to the light, undeceives us, and by convincing us of the truth, doth us a kindness. If I am brought to a sight of truth, and am made sensible of things as they really are, my duty is immediately to thank God for it, without standing first to inquire by what means I have such a benefit.

V. If the spirit that is at work among a people operates as a spirit of love to God and man, it is a sure sign that it is the Spirit of God. This sign the apostle insists upon from the 6th verse to the end of the chapter. "Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God: He that loveth not, knoweth not God; for God is love," &c. Here it is evident, that the apostle is still comparing those two sorts of persons that are influenced by the opposite kinds of spirits; and mentions love as a mark by which we may know who has the true spirit: but this is especially evident by the 12th and 13th verses. "If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us: hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit. In these verses love is spoken of as if it were that wherein the very nature of the Holy Spirit consisted; or, as if *divine love* dwelling in us, and the *Spirit of God* dwelling in us, were the same thing; as it is also in the last two verses of the foregoing chapter, and in the 16th verse of this chapter. Therefore this last mark which the apostle gives of the true spirit, he seems to speak of as the most eminent; and so insists much more largely upon it, than upon all the rest; and speaks expressly of both love to God and men; of *love to men* in the 7th, 11th, and 12th verses; and of *love to God*, in the 17th, 18th, and 19th verses; and of both together, in the last two verses; and of love to men, as arising from love to God, in these last two verses.

Therefore, when the spirit that is at work amongst the people, tends this way, and brings many of them to high and exalting thoughts of the divine Being, and his glorious perfections: and works in them an admiring, delightful sense of the excellency of Jesus Christ; representing him as the chief among ten thousand, and altogether lovely, and makes him precious to the soul: winning and drawing the heart with those motives and incitements of love, of which the apostle speaks in that passage of scripture we are upon, viz. the wonderful,

free love of God in giving his only begotten Son to die for us, and the wonderful dying love of Christ to us, who had no love to him, but were his enemies; must needs be the Spirit of God, as ver. 9, 10. "In this was manifested the love of God towards us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. Herein is love; not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins." And ver. 16. "And we have known, and believed the love that God hath to us;" and ver. 19. "We love him because he first loved us." The spirit that excites to love on these motives, and makes the attributes of God, as revealed in the gospel, and manifested in Christ, delightful objects of contemplation; and makes the soul to long after God and Christ—after their presence and communion, acquaintance with them, and conformity to them—and to live so as to please and honour them: the spirit that quells contentions among men, and gives a spirit of peace and good will, excites to acts of outward kindness, and earnest desires of the salvation of souls—and causes a delight in those that appear as the children of God, and followers of Christ; I say, when a spirit operates after this manner among a people, there is the highest kind of evidence of the influence of a true and divine spirit.

Indeed there is a counterfeit love, that often appears among those who are led by a spirit of delusion. There is commonly in the wildest enthusiasts, a kind of union and affection, arising from self-love, occasioned by their agreeing in those things wherein they greatly differ from all others, and from which they are objects of the ridicule of all the rest of mankind. This naturally will cause them so much the more to prize those peculiarities that make them the objects of others' contempt. Thus the ancient Gnostics, and the wild fanatics that appeared at the beginning of the reformation, boasted of their great love one to another; one sect of them in particular, calling themselves the *family of love*. But this is quite another thing than that Christian love I have just described: it is only the working of a natural self-love, and no true benevolence, any more than the union and friendship which may be among a company of pirates, that are at war with all the rest of the world. There is enough said in this passage of the nature of a truly Christian love, thoroughly to distinguish it from all such counterfeits. It is love that arises from apprehension of the wonderful riches of the free grace and sovereignty of God's love to us, in Christ Jesus; being attended with a sense of our own utter unworthiness, as in ourselves the enemies and haters of God and Christ, and with a renunciation of all our own excellency and righteousness. See ver. 9, 10, 11, and 19. The surest character of true divine supernatural love—

distinguishing it from counterfeits that arise from a natural spiritual self-love—is, that the Christian virtue of *humility* shines in it; that which above all others renounces, abases, and annihilates what we term *self*. Christian love or true charity, is an humble love. 1 Cor. xiii. 4, 5. "Charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked." When therefore we see love in persons attended with a sense of their own littleness, vileness, weakness, and utter insufficiency; and so with self-diffidence, self-emptiness, self-renunciation, and poverty of spirit; these are the manifest tokens of the spirit of God. He that thus dwells in love, dwells in God, and God in him. What the apostle speaks of as a great evidence of the true spirit, is God's love or Christ's love: as ver. 12—"his love is perfected in us." What kind of love that is, we may see best in what appeared in Christ's example. The love that appeared in that Lamb of God, was not only a love to friends, but to enemies, and a love attended with a meek and humble spirit. "Learn of me," says he, "for I am meek and lowly in heart." Love and humility are two things the most contrary to the spirit of the devil, of any thing in the world; for the character of that evil spirit, above all things, consists in pride and malice.

Thus I have spoken particularly to the several marks the apostle gives us of a work of the true spirit. There are some of these things which the devil *would not* do, if he could: thus he would not awaken the conscience, and make men sensible of their miserable state by reason of sin, and sensible of their great need of a saviour; and he would not confirm men in the belief that Jesus is the Son of God, and the Saviour of sinners, or raise men's value and esteem of him; he would not beget in men's minds an opinion of the necessity, usefulness, and truth of the holy scriptures, or incline them to make much use of them; nor would he show men the truth in things that concern their soul's interest; to undeceive them, and lead them out of darkness into light, and give them a view of things as they really are. And there are other things that the devil *neither can nor will* do: he will not give men a spirit of divine love, or Christian humility and poverty of spirit; nor *could* he if he would. He cannot give those things he has not himself: these things are as contrary as possible to his nature. And therefore when there is an extraordinary influence or operation appearing on the minds of a people, if these things are found in it, we are safe in determining that it is the work of God, whatever other circumstances it may be attended with, whatever instruments are used, whatever methods are taken to promote it; whatever means a sovereign God, whose judgments are a great deep,

employs to carry it on; and whatever motion there may be of the animal spirits, whatever effects may be wrought on men's bodies. These marks, that the apostle has given us, are sufficient to stand alone, and support themselves. They plainly shew *the finger of God*, and are sufficient to outweigh a thousand such little objections, as many make from oddities, irregularities, errors in conduct, and the delusions and scandals of some professors.

But here some may *object* to the sufficiency of the marks given, what the apostle Paul says in 2 Cor. xi. 13, 14. "For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ; and no marvel, for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light."

To which I *answer*, that this can be no objection against the sufficiency of these marks to distinguish the true from the false spirit, in those false apostles and prophets, in whom the devil was transformed into an angel of light, because it is principally with a view to them that the apostle gives these marks; as appears by the words of the text, "Believe not every spirit, but try the spirits, whether they are of God;" and this is the reason he gives, because many false prophets are gone out into the world: viz. "There are many gone out into the world who are the ministers of the devil, who transform themselves into the prophets of God, in whom the spirit of the devil is transformed into an angel of light; therefore try the spirits by these rules that I shall give you, that you may be able to distinguish the true spirit from the false, under such a crafty disguise." Those false prophets the apostle John speaks of, are doubtless the same sort of men with those false apostles, and deceitful workers, that the apostle Paul speaks of, in whom the devil was transformed into an angel of light: and therefore we may be sure that these marks are especially adapted to distinguish between the true spirit and the devil transformed into an angel of light, because they are given especially for that end; that is the apostle's declared purpose and design, to give marks by which the true spirit may be distinguished from that sort of counterfeits.

And if we look over what is said about these false prophets and false apostles, (as there is much said about them in the New Testament,) and take notice in what manner the devil was transformed into an angel of light in them, we shall not find any thing that in the least injures the sufficiency of these marks to distinguish the true spirit from such counterfeits. The devil transformed himself into an angel of light, as there was in them a shew, and great boast of extraordinary knowledge in divine things: Col. ii. 8. 1 Tim. i, 6, 7, and chap. vi. 3, 4, 5. 2 Tim. ii. 14—18. Tit. i. 10, 16.

Hence their followers called themselves Gnostics, from their great pretended knowledge: and the devil in them mimicked the miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit, in visions, revelations, prophecies, miracles, &c. Hence they are called false apostles, and false prophets: see Matt. xxiv. 24. Again, there was a false shew of, and lying pretensions to great holiness and devotion in words: Rom. xvi. 17, 18. Ephes. iv. 14. Hence they are called deceitful workers, and wells, and clouds without water. 2 Cor. xi. 13. 2 Pet. ii. 17.—Jude 12. There was also in them a shew of extraordinary piety and righteousness in their superstitious worship: Col. ii. 16—23. So they had a false, proud, and bitter zeal: Gal. iv. 17, 18. 1 Tim. i. 6. and chap. vi. 4, 5. And likewise a false shew of humility, in affecting an extraordinary outward meanness and dejection, when indeed they were "vainly puffed up in their fleshly mind:" and made a righteousness of their humility, and were exceedingly lifted up with their eminent piety: Col. ii. 18, 23. But how do such things as these, in the least injure those things that have been mentioned as the distinguishing evidences of the true spirit?—Besides such vain shews which may be from the devil, these are common influences of the spirit, which are often mistaken for saving grace; but these are out of the question, because though they are not saving, yet are the work of the true spirit.

Having thus fulfilled what I at first proposed, in considering what are the certain, distinguishing marks, by which we may safely proceed in judging of any work that falls under our observation, whether it be the work of the Spirit of God or no; I now proceed to the APPLICATION.

SECT. III.

Practical Inferences.

I. From what has been said, I will venture to draw this inference, viz. *That the extraordinary influence that has lately appeared, causing an uncommon concern and engagedness of mind about the things of religion, is undoubtedly, in the general, from the Spirit of God.* There are but two things that need to be known in order to such a work's being judged of, viz. *Facts* and *Rules*. The *rules* of the word of God we have had laid before us; and as to *facts*, there are but two ways that we can come at them, so as to be in a capacity to compare them with the rules, either by our own observation or by information from others who have had opportunity to observe them.

As to this work, there are many things concerning it that are notorious, and which, unless the apostle John was out in his rules, are sufficient to determine it to be in general the work of God. The spirit that is at work takes off persons' minds from the vanities of the world, and engages them in a deep concern about eternal happiness, and puts them upon earnestly seeking their salvation, and convinces them of the dreadfulness of sin, and of their own guilty and miserable state as they are by nature. It awakens men's consciences, and makes them sensible of the dreadfulness of God's anger, and causes in them a great desire and earnest care and endeavour to obtain his favour. It puts them upon a more diligent improvement of the means of grace which God has appointed; accompanied with a greater regard to the word of God, a desire of hearing and reading it, and of being more conversant with it than they used to be. And it is notoriously manifest, that the spirit that is at work, in general, operates as a spirit of truth, making persons more sensible of what is really true in those things that concern their eternal salvation: As, that they must die, and that life is very short and uncertain; that there is a great sin-hating God, to whom they are accountable, and who will fix them in an eternal state in another world; and that they stand in great need of a Saviour. It makes persons more sensible of the value of Jesus who was crucified, and their need of him; and that it puts them upon earnestly seeking an interest in him. It cannot be but that these things should be apparent to people in general through the land; for these things are not done in a corner; the work has not been confined to a few towns, in some remoter parts, but has been carried on in many places all over the land, and in most of the principal, the populous, and public places in it. Christ in this respect has wrought amongst us, in the same manner that he wrought his miracles in Judea. It has now been continued for a considerable time; so that there has been a great opportunity to observe the manner of the work. And all such as have been very conversant with the subject of it, see a great deal more, that by the rules of the apostle, does clearly and certainly shew it to be the work of God.

And here I would observe, that the nature and tendency of a spirit that is at work, may be determined with much greater certainty, and less danger of being imposed upon, when it is observed in a great multitude of people of all sorts, and in various places, than when it is only seen in a few, in some particular place, that have been much conversant one with another. A few particular persons may agree to put a cheat upon others, by a false pretence, and professing things of which they never were conscious. But when the work is spread

over great parts of a country, in places distant from one another among people of all sorts and of all ages, and in multitudes possessed of a sound mind, good understanding, and known integrity; there would be the greatest absurdity in supposing, from all the observation that can be made by all that is heard from, and seen in them—for many months together, and by those who are most intimate with them in these affairs, and have long been acquainted with them—that yet it cannot be determined what kind of influence the operation they are under, has upon the people's minds: can it not be determined whether it tends to awaken their consciences, or to stupify them; whether it inclines them more to seek their salvation, or neglect it; whether it seems to confirm them in a belief of the scriptures, or to lead them to Deism; whether it makes them have more regard for the great truths of religion or less?

And here it is to be observed, that for persons to profess that they are so convinced of certain divine truths, as to esteem and love them in a *saving manner;* and for them to profess, that they are *more convinced* or confirmed in the truth of them, than they used to be, and find that they have a greater regard to them than they had before, are two very different things. Persons of honesty and common sense have much greater right to demand credit to be given to the latter profession than to the former. Indeed in the former, it is less likely that a people in general should be deceived, than some particular persons. But whether persons' convictions, and the alteration in their dispositions and affections, be in a degree and manner that is saving, is beside the present question. If there be such effects on peoples' judgments, dispositions, and affections, as have been spoken of, whether they be in a degree and manner that is saving or no, it is nevertheless a sign of the influence of the Spirit of God. Scripture rules serve to distinguish the common influences of the Spirit of God, as well as those that are saving, from the influence of other causes.

And as by the providence of God, I have for some months past been much amongst those who have been the subjects of the work in question; and particularly, have been in the way of seeing and observing those extraordinary things with which many persons have been offended;—such as persons crying out aloud, shrieking, being put into great agonies of body, &c.—and have seen the manner and issue of such operations, and the fruits of them, for several months together; many of them being persons with whom I have been intimately acquainted in soul concerns, before and since; so I look upon myself called on this occasion to give my testimony, that—so far as the nature and tendency of such a work is capable of falling under the observation of a by-stander, to whom those that have been the subject of it have endeavoured to open

their hearts, or can be come at by diligent and particular inquiry—this work has all those marks that have been pointed out. And this has been the case in very many instances, in *every article;* and in many others, all those marks have appeared in a very *great degree.*

The subjects of these uncommon appearances, have been of two sorts; either those who have been in great distress from an apprehension of their sin and misery; or those who have been overcome with a sweet sense of the greatness, wonderfulness, and excellency of divine things. Of the multitude of those of the former sort, that I have had opportunity to observe, these have been very few, but their distress has arisen apparently from real proper conviction, and being in a degree sensible of that which was the truth. And though I do not suppose, when such things were observed to be common, that persons have laid themselves under those violent restraints to avoid outward manifestations of their distress, that perhaps they otherwise would have done; yet there have been very few in whom there has been any appearance of feigning or affecting such manifestations, and very many for whom it would have been undoubtedly utterly impossible for them to avoid them. Generally, in these agonies they have appeared to be in the perfect exercise of their reason; and those of them who could speak, have been well able to give an account of the circumstances of their mind, and the cause of their distress, at the time, and were able to remember, and give an account of it afterwards. I have known a very few instances of those, who, in their great extremity, have for a short space been deprived in some measure of the use of reason; but among the many hundreds, and it may be thousands, that have lately been brought to such agonies, I never yet knew one, lastingly deprived of their reason. In some that I have known, melancholy has evidently been mixt; and when it is so, the difference is very apparent; their distresses are of another kind, and operate quite after another manner, than when their distress is from mere conviction. It is not truth only that distresses them, but many vain shadows and notions that will not give place either to scripture or reason. Some in their great distress have not been well able to give an account of themselves, or to declare the sense they have of things, or to explain the manner and cause of their trouble to others, that yet I have had no reason to think were not under proper convictions, and in whom there has been manifested a good issue. But this will not be at all wondered at, by those who have had much to do with souls under spiritual difficulties: some things of which they are sensible, are altogether new to them; their ideas and inward sensations are new, and what they therefore know not how to express in

words. Some who on first inquiry, said they knew not what was the matter with them, have on being particularly examined and interrogated, been able to represent their case, though of themselves they could not find expressions, and forms of speech to do it.

Some suppose, that terrors producing such effects, are only a fright. But certainly there ought to be a distinction made between a very great fear, or extreme distress arising from an apprehension of some dreadful truth—a cause fully proportionable to such an effect—and a needless, causeless fright. The latter is of two kinds; either, first when persons are terrified with that which is not the truth; (of which I have seen very few instances unless in case of melancholy;) or, secondly, when they are in a fright from some terrible outward appearance and noise, and a general notion thence arising. These apprehend, that there is something or other terrible, they know not what; without having in their minds any particular truth whatever. Of such a kind of fright I have seen very little appearance, among either old or young.

Those who are in such extremity, commonly express a great sense of their exceeding wickedness, the multitude and aggravations of their actual sins; their dreadful pollution, enmity, and perverseness; their obstinacy and hardness of heart; a sense of their great guilt in the sight of God; and the dreadfulness of the punishment due to sin. Very often they have a lively idea of the horrible pit of eternal misery; and at the same time it appears to them, that the great God who has them in his hands, is exceedingly angry, and his wrath appears amazingly terrible to them. God appears to them so much provoked and his great wrath so increased that they are apprehensive of great danger, and that he will not bear with them any longer; but will now forthwith cut them off, and send them down to the dreadful pit they have in view; at the same time seeing no refuge. They see more and more of the vanity of every thing they used to trust to, and with which they flattered themselves, till they are brought wholly to despair in all, and to see that they are at the disposal of the mere will of that God who is so angry with them. Very many, in the midst of their extremity, have been brought to an extraordinary sense of their fully deserving that wrath, and the destruction which was then before their eyes. They feared every moment, that it would be executed upon them; they have been greatly convinced that this would be altogether just, and that God is indeed absolutely sovereign. Very often, some text of scripture expressing God's sovereignty, has been set home upon their minds, whereby they have been calmed. They have been brought, as it were, to lie at God's feet; and after great agonies, a little before light has arisen, they have

been composed and quiet, in submission to a just and sovereign God; but their bodily strength much spent. Sometimes their lives, to appearance, were almost gone; and then light has appeared, and a glorious Redeemer, with his wonderful, all-sufficient grace, has been represented to them often, in some sweet invitation of scripture. Sometimes the light comes in suddenly, sometimes more gradually, filling their souls with love, admiration, joy, and self-abasement: drawing forth their hearts after the excellent lovely Redeemer, and longings to lie in the dust before him; and that others might behold, embrace, and be delivered by him. They had longings to live to his glory; but were sensible that they can do nothing of themselves, appearing vile in their own eyes, and having much jealousy over their own hearts. And all the appearances of a real change of heart have followed; and grace has acted, from time to time, after the same manner that it used to act in those that were converted formerly, with the like difficulties, temptations, buffetings, and comforts; excepting that in many, the light and comfort have been in higher degrees than ordinary.—Many very young children have been thus wrought upon. There have been some instances very much like those (Mark i. 26. and Chap. ix. 26.) of whom we read, that "when the devil had cried with a loud voice, and rent them sore, he came out of them." And probably those instances were designed for a type of such things as these. Some have several turns of great agonies, before they are delivered; and others have been in such distress, which has passed off, and no deliverance at all has followed.

Some object against it as great confusion, when there is a number together in such circumstances making a noise; and say, God cannot be the author of it; because he is the God of order, not of confusion. But let it be considered, what is the proper notion of confusion, but the breaking that order of things, whereby they are properly disposed, and duly directed to their end, so that the order and due connexion of means being broken, they fail of their end. Now the conviction of sinners for their conversion is the obtaining of the end of religious means. Not but that I think the persons thus extraordinarily moved, should endeavour to refrain from such outward manifestations, what they well can, and should refrain to their utmost, at the time of their solemn worship. But if God is pleased to convince the consciences of persons, so that they cannot avoid great outward manifestations, even to interrupting, and breaking off those public means they were attending, I do not think this is confusion, or an unhappy interruption, any more than if a company should meet on the field to pray for rain, and should be broken off from their exercise by a plentiful shower. Would to God that all the

public assemblies in the land were broken off, from their public exercises, with such confusion as this the next Sabbath day! We need not be sorry for breaking the order of means, by obtaining the end to which that order is directed. He who is going to fetch a treasure, need not be sorry that he is stopped, by meeting the treasure in the midst of his journey.

Besides those who are overcome with conviction and distress, I have seen many of late, who have had their bodily strength taken away with a sense of the glorious excellency of the Redeemer, and the wonders of his dying love; with a very uncommon sense of their own littleness and exceeding vileness attending it, with all expressions and appearances of the greatest abasement and abhorrence of themselves. Not only new converts, but many who were, as we hope, formerly converted, have had their love and joy attended with a flood of tears and a great appearance of contrition and humiliation, especially for their having lived no more to God's glory since their conversion. These have had a far greater sight of their vileness, and the evil of their hearts, than ever they had; with an exceeding earnestness of desire to live better for the time to come, but attended with greater self-diffidence than ever: and many have been overcome with pity to the souls of others, and longing for their salvation.—And many other things I might mention, in this extraordinary work, answering to every one of those marks which have been insisted on. So that if the apostle John knew how to give signs of a work of the true spirit, this is such a work.

Providence has cast my lot in a place where the work of God has *formerly* been carried on. I had the happiness to be settled in that place two years with the venerable Stoddard; and was then acquainted with a number who, during that season, were wrought upon under his ministry. I have been intimately acquainted with the experiences of many others who were wrought upon under his ministry, before that period, in a manner agreeable to the doctrine of all orthodox divines. And of late, a work has been carried on there, with very much of uncommon operations; but it is evidently the same work, that was carried on there, in different periods, though attended with some new circumstances. And certainly we must throw by all talk of conversion and christian experience; and not only so, but we must throw by our Bibles, and give up revealed religion, if this be not in general the work of God. Not that I suppose the degree of the spirit's influence, is to be determined by the degree of effect on men's bodies; or, that those are always the best experiences, which have the greatest influence on the body.

And as to the imprudences, irregularities, and mixture of delusion that has been observed; it is not at all to be won-

dered at, that a reformation, after a long continued and almost universal deadness, should at first, when the revival is new, be attended with such things. In the first creation God did not make a complete world at once; but there was a great deal of imperfection, darkness, and mixture of chaos and confusion, after God first said, "Let there be light," before the whole stood forth in perfect form. When God at first began his great work for the deliverance of his people, after their long continued bondage in Egypt, there were false wonders mixed with the true for a while; which hardened the unbelieving Egyptians, and made them to doubt of the divinity of the whole work. When the children of Israel first went to bring up the ark of God, after it had been neglected, and had been long absent, they sought not the Lord after the due order, 1 Chron. xv. 13. At the time when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, Satan came also among them. And Solomon's ships, when they brought gold, and silver, and pearls, also brought apes and peacocks. When daylight first appears after a night of darkness, we must expect to have darkness mixt with light for a while, and not have perfect day, and the sun risen at once. The fruits of the earth are first green before they are ripe, and come to their proper perfection gradually; and so Christ tells us, is the kingdom of God. Mark iv. 26, 27, 28. "So is the kingdom of God; as if a man should cast seed into the ground, and should sleep and rise night and day, and the seed should spring and grow up, he knoweth not how: for the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself; first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear."

The imprudences and errors that have attended this work, are the less to be wondered at, if it be considered that chiefly young persons have been the subjects of it, who have less steadiness and experience, and being in the heat of youth, are much more ready to run to extremes. Satan will keep men secure as long as he can; but when he can do that no longer, he often endeavours to drive them to extremes, and so to dishonour God and wound religion in that way. And doubtless it has been one occasion of much misconduct, that in many places, people see plainly that their ministers have an ill opinion of the work; and therefore, with just reason, durst not apply themselves to them as their guides in it: and so are without guides.—No wonder then that when a people are as sheep without a shepherd, they wander out of the way. A people in such circumstances, stand in great and continual need of guides, and their guides stand in continual need of much more wisdom than they have of their own. And if a people have ministers that favour the work, and rejoice in it, yet it is not to be expected, that either the people or ministers, should

know so well how to conduct themselves in such an extraordinary state of things—while it is new, and what they never had any experience of before, and time to see their tendency, consequences, and issue. The happy influence of experience is very manifest at this day, in the people among whom God has settled my abode. The work which has been carried on there this year, has been much purer than that which was wrought there six years before: it has seemed to be more purely spiritual; free from natural and corrupt mixtures, and any thing savouring of enthusiastic wildness and extravagance. It has wrought more by deep humiliation and abasement before God and men; and they have been much freer from imprudences and irregularities. And particularly, there has been a remarkable difference in this respect, that whereas many before, in their comforts and rejoicings, did too much forget their distance from God, and were ready in their conversation together of the things of God, and of their own experiences, to talk with too much lightness; but now they seem to have no disposition that way, but rejoice with a more solemn, reverential, humble joy, as God directs. (Psalm ii. 11.) Not because the joy is not as great, and in many instances much greater. Many among us who were wrought upon in that former season, have now had much greater communications from heaven then they had then. Their rejoicing operates in another manner: it abases them, breaks their hearts, and brings them into the dust. When they speak of their joys, it is not with laughter, but a flood of tears. Thus those that laughed before, weep now, and yet by their united testimony, their joy is vastly purer and sweeter than that which before did more raise their animal spirits. They are now more like Jacob, when God appeared to him at Bethel, when he saw the ladder that reached to heaven, and said, "How dreadful is this place!" And like Moses, when God shewed him his glory on the mount, when he made haste and "bowed himself unto the earth."

II. Let us all be hence warned, *by no means to oppose, or do any thing in the least to clog or hinder the work: but, on the contrary, do our utmost to promote it.* Now Christ is come down from heaven in a remarkable and wonderful work of his Spirit, it becomes all his professed disciples to acknowledge him, and give him honour.

The example of the Jews in Christ's and the apostles' times, is enough to beget in those who do not acknowledge this work, a great jealousy of themselves, and to make them exceeding cautious of what they say or do. Christ then was in the world, and the world knew him not: he came to his own professing people, and his own received him not. That

coming of Christ had been much spoken of in the prophecies of scripture which they had in their hands, and it had been long expected; and yet because Christ came in a manner they did not expect, and which was not agreeable to their carnal reason, they would not own him. Nay, they opposed him, counted him a madman, and pronounced the spirit that he wrought by to be the spirit of the devil. They stood and wondered at the great things done, and knew not what to make of them; but yet they met with so many stumbling blocks, that they finally could not acknowledge him. And when the Spirit of God came to be poured out so wonderfully in the apostles' days, they looked upon it as confusion and distraction. They were *astonished* by what they saw and heard, but not *convinced.* And especially was the work of God then rejected by those that were most conceited of their own understanding and knowledge, agreeable to Isa. xxix. 14. "Therefore, behold, I will proceed to do a marvellous work amongst this people, even a marvellous work and a wonder; for the wisdom of their wise men shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent men shall be hid." And many who had been in reputation for religion and piety, had a great spite against the work, because they saw it tended to diminish their honour, and to reproach their formality and lukewarmness. Some upon these accounts, maliciously and openly opposed and reproached the work of the Spirit of God, and called it the work of the devil, against inward conviction, and so were guilty of the unpardonable sin against the Holy Ghost.

There is another, a spiritual coming of Christ, to set up his kingdom in the world, that is as much spoken of in scripture prophecy as that first coming, and which has long been expected by the church of God. We have reason to think, from what is said of this, that it will be, in many respects, parallel with the other. And certainly, that low state into which the visible church of God has lately been sunk, is very parallel with the state of the Jewish church, when Christ came; and therefore no wonder at all, that when Christ comes, his work should appear a strange work to most; yea, it would be a wonder if it should be otherwise. Whether the present work be the beginning of that great and frequently predicted coming of Christ to set up his kingdom, or not, it is evident, from what has been said, that it is a work of the same spirit, and of the same nature. And there is no reason to doubt, but that the conduct of persons who continue long to refuse acknowledging Christ in the work—especially those who are set to be teachers in his church—will be in like manner provoking to God, as it was in the Jews of old, while refusing to acknowledge Christ: notwithstanding what they may plead

of the great stumbling blocks that are in the way, and the cause they have to doubt of the work. The teachers of the Jewish church found innumerable stumbling blocks, that were to them insuperable. Many things appeared in Christ, and in the work of the Spirit after his ascension, which were exceeding strange to them; they seemed assured that they had just cause for their scruples. Christ and his work were to the Jews a stumbling block: "But blessed is he," says Christ, "whosoever shall not be offended in me." As strange and as unexpected as the manner of Christ's appearance was, yet he had not been long in Judea working miracles, before all those who had opportunity to observe, and yet refused to acknowledge him, brought fearful guilt upon themselves in the sight of God; and Christ condemned them, that though "they could discern the face of the sky, and of the earth, yet they could not discern the signs of those times; and why," says he, "even of yourselves, judge ye not what is right?" Luke xii. at the latter end.

It is not to be supposed that the great Jehovah has bowed the heavens, and appeared here now for so long a time, in such a glorious work of his power and grace—in so extensive a manner, in the most public places of the land, and in almost all parts of it—without giving such evidences of his presence, that great numbers, and even many teachers in his church, can remain guiltless in his sight, without ever receiving and acknowledging him, and giving him honour, and appearing to rejoice in his gracious presence; or without so much as once giving him thanks for so glorious and blessed a work of his grace, wherein his goodness does more appear, than if he had bestowed on us all the temporal blessings that the world affords. A long continued silence in such a case is undoubtedly provoking to God; especially in ministers. It is a secret kind of opposition, that really tends to hinder the work. Such silent ministers stand in the way of the work of God, as Christ said of old, "He that is not with us is against us." Those who stand wondering at this strange work, not knowing what to make of it, and refusing to receive it—and ready it may be sometimes to speak contemptibly of it, as was the case with the Jews of old—would do well to consider and to tremble at St. Paul's words to them, Acts xiii. 40, 41. "Beware, therefore, lest that come upon you, which is spoken of in the prophets; Behold ye despisers, and wonder and perish: for I work a work in your days, which you shall in no wise believe, though a man declare it unto you." Those who cannot believe the work to be true, because of the extraordinary degree and manner of it, should consider how it was with the unbelieving lord in Samaria, who said, "Behold, if the Lord should make windows in heaven, might this thing

be?" To whom Elisha said, "Behold thou shall see it with thine eyes, but shall not eat thereof." Let all to whom this work is a cloud and darkness—as the pillar of cloud and fire was to the Egyptians—take heed that it be not their destruction, while it gives light to God's Israel.

I would entreat those who quiet themselves, that they proceed on a principle of prudence, and are waiting to see the issue of things—and what fruits those that are the subjects of this work will bring forth in their lives and conversations—to consider, whether this will justify a long refraining from acknowledging Christ when he appears so wonderfully and graciously present in the land. It is probable that many of those who are thus waiting, know not for what they are waiting. If they wait to see a work of God without difficulties and stumbling blocks, it will be like the fool's waiting at the river side to have the water all run by. A work of God without stumbling blocks is never to be expected. "It must need be that offences come." There never yet was any great manifestation that God made of himself to the world, without many difficulties attending it. It is with the works of God, as with his word; they seem at first full of things that are strange, inconsistent, and difficult to the carnal unbelieving hearts of men. Christ and his work always was, and always will be, a stone of stumbling, and rock of offence, a gin and a snare to many. The prophet Hosea, (chap. xiv.) speaking of a glorious revival of religion in God's church—when God would be as the dew unto Israel, who should grow as the lily, and cast forth his roots as Lebanon, whose branches should spread, &c.—concludes all thus: "Who is wise, and he shall understand these things? prudent, and he shall know them? for the ways of the Lord are right, and the just shall walk in them; but the transgressors shall fall therein."

It is probable that the stumbling blocks that now attend this work, will in some respects be increased, and not diminished. We probably shall see more instances of apostacy and gross iniquity among professors. And if one kind of stumbling blocks are removed, it is to be expected that others will come. It is with Christ's works as it was with his parables; things that are difficult to men's dark minds are ordered of purpose, for the trial of their dispositions and spiritual sense; and that those of corrupt minds and of an unbelieving, perverse, cavilling spirit, "seeing might see, and not understand." Those who are now waiting to see the issue of this work, think they shall be better able to determine by and by; but probably many of them are mistaken. The Jews that saw Christ's miracles, waited to see better evidences of his being the Messiah; they wanted a sign from heaven; but they waited in vain; their stumbling blocks did not diminish, but increase.

They found no end to them, and so were more and more hardened in unbelief. Many have been praying for that glorious reformation spoken of in scripture, who knew not what they have been praying for, (as it was with the Jews when they prayed for the coming of Christ,) and who, if it should come, would not acknowledge or receive it.

This pretended prudence, in persons waiting so long before they acknowledged this work, will probably in the end prove the greatest imprudence. Hereby they will fail of any share of so great a blessing, and will miss the most precious opportunity of obtaining divine light, grace and comfort, heavenly and eternal benefits, that God ever gave in New England. While the glorious fountain is set open in so wonderful a manner, and multitudes flock to it and receive a rich supply for the wants of their souls, they stand at a distance, doubting, wondering, and receiving nothing, and are like to continue thus till the precious season is past. It is indeed to be wondered at, that those who have doubted of the work, which has been attended with such uncommon external appearances, should be easy in their doubts, without taking thorough pains to inform themselves, by going where such things have been to be seen, narrowly observing, and diligently inquiring into them; not contenting themselves with observing two or three instances, nor resting till they were fully informed by their own observation. I do not doubt but that if this course had been taken, it would have convinced all whose minds are not shut up against conviction. How greatly have they erred, who only from the uncertain reproofs of others, have ventured to speak slightly of these things? That caution of an unbelieving Jew might teach them more prudence, Acts v. 38, 39. "Refrain from these men, and let them alone; for if this counsel, or this work be of men, it will come to nought; but if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it; lest haply ye be found to fight against God." Whether what has been said in this discourse be enough to produce conviction, that this is the work of God or not; yet I hope that for the future, they will at least hearken to the caution of Gamaliel, now mentioned; so as not to oppose it, or say any thing which has even an indirect tendency to bring it into discredit, lest they should be found opposers of the Holy Ghost. There is no kind of sin so hurtful and dangerous to the souls of men, as those committed against the Holy Ghost. We had better speak against God the Father, or the Son, than to speak against the Holy Spirit in his gracious operations on the hearts of men. Nothing will so much tend for ever to prevent our having any benefit of his operations on our own souls.

If there be any who still resolutely go on to speak contemptibly of these things, I would beg of them to take heed that

they be not guilty of the unpardonable sin. When the Holy Spirit is much poured out, and men's lusts, lukewarmness and hypocrisy, are reproached by its powerful operations, then is the most likely time of any for this sin to be committed. If the work goes on, it is well if among the many that shew an enmity against it, some be not guilty of this sin, if none have been already. Those who maliciously oppose and reproach this work, and call it the work of the devil, want but one thing of the unpardonable sin, and that is, doing it against inward conviction. And though some are so prudent, as not openly to oppose and reproach this work, yet it is to be feared—at this day, when the Lord is going forth so gloriously against his enemies—that many who are silent and inactive, especially ministers, will bring that curse of the angel of the Lord upon themselves, Judg. v. 23. "Curse ye Meroz, said the angel of the Lord, curse ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof; because they came not to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty."

Since the great God has come down from heaven, and manifested himself in so wonderful a manner in this land, it is vain for any of us to expect any other than to be greatly affected by it in our spiritual state and circumstances, respecting the favour of God, one way or other. Those who do not become more happy by it, will become far more guilty and miserable. It is always so; such a season as proves an acceptable year, and a time of great favour to them who accept and improve it, proves a day of vengeance to others. Isai. lix. 2. When God sends forth his *word*, it shall not return to him void; much less his *Spirit*. When Christ was upon earth in Judea, many slighted and rejected him; but it proved in the issue to be no matter of indifference to them. God made all that people to feel that Christ had been among them; those who did not feel it to their comfort, felt it to their great sorrow. When God only sent the prophet Ezekiel to the Children of Israel, he declared, that whether they would hear or whether they would forbear, yet they should know that there had been a prophet among them; how much more may we suppose that when God has appeared so wonderfully in this land, that he will make every one to know that the great Jehovah had been in New England.—I come now in the last place.

III. To apply myself to those who are the friends of this work, who have been partakers of it, and are zealous to promote it. Let me earnestly exhort such to give diligent heed to themselves to avoid all errors and misconduct, and whatever may darken and obscure the work; and to give no occasion to those who stand ready to reproach it. The

apostle was careful to cut off occasion from those that desired occasion. The same apostle exhorts Titus to maintain a strict care and watch over himself, that both his preaching and behaviour might be such as "could not be condemned; that he who was of the contrary part might be ashamed, having no evil thing to say of them," Tit. ii. 7, 8.—We had need to be wise as serpents and harmless as doves. It is of no small consequence that we should at this day behave ourselves innocently and prudently. We must expect that the great enemy of this work will especially try his utmost with us; and he will especially triumph, if he can prevail in any thing to blind and mislead us. He knows it will do more to further his purpose and interest than if he prevailed against an hundred others. We had need to watch and pray, for we are but little children; this roaring lion is too strong for us, and this old serpent too subtle for us.

Humility and self-diffidence, and an entire dependence on our Lord Jesus Christ, will be our best defence. Let us therefore maintain the strictest watch against spiritual pride, or being lifted up with extraordinary experiences and comforts, and the high favours of heaven, that any of us may have received. We had need after such favours, in a special manner to keep a strict and jealous eye upon our own hearts, lest there should arise self-exalting reflections upon what we have received, and high thoughts of ourselves as being now some of the most eminent of saints and peculiar favourites of heaven, and that the secret of the Lord is especially with us. Let us not presume, that we above all are fit to be advanced as the great instructors and censors of this evil generation; and, in a high conceit of our own wisdom and discerning, assume to ourselves the airs of prophets, or extraordinary ambassadors of heaven. When we have great discoveries of God made to our souls, we should not shine bright in our own eyes. Moses, when he had been conversing with God in the mount, though his face shone so as to dazzle the eyes of Aaron and the people, yet he did not shine in his own eyes; "he wist not that his face shone." Let none think themselves out of danger of this spiritual pride, even in their best frames. God saw that the apostle Paul (though probably the most eminent saint that ever lived) was not out of danger of it, no, not when he had just been conversing with God in the third heaven: see 2 Cor. xii. 7. Pride is the worst viper in the heart; it is the first sin that ever entered into the universe, lies lowest of all in the foundation of the whole building of sin, and is the most secret, deceitful and unsearchable in its ways of working, of any lusts whatever. It is ready to mix with every thing; and nothing is so hateful

to God, contrary to the spirit of the gospel, or of so dangerous consequence; and there is no one sin that does so much let in the devil into the hearts of the saints, and expose them to his delusions. I have seen it in many instances, and that in eminent saints. The devil has come in at this door presently after some eminent experience and extraordinary communion with God, and has woefully deluded and led them astray, till God has mercifully opened their eyes and delivered them; and they themselves have afterwards been made sensible that it was pride that betrayed them.

Some of the true friends of the work of God's Spirit have erred in giving too much heed to impulses and strong impressions on their minds, as though they were immediate significations from heaven to them, of something that should come to pass, or something that it was the mind and the will of God that they should do, which was not signified or revealed any where in the Bible without those impulses. These impressions, if they are truly from the Spirit of God, are of a quite different nature from his gracious influences on the hearts of the saints: they are of the nature of the extraordinary *gifts* of the Spirit, and are properly inspiration, such as the prophets and apostles and others had of old; which the apostle distinguishes from the *grace* of the Spirit, 1 Cor. xiii.

One reason why some have been ready to lay weight on such impulses, is an opinion they have had, That the glory of the approaching happy days of the church would partly consist in restoring those *extraordinary gifts* of the Spirit. This opinion, I believe, arises partly through want of duly considering and comparing the nature and value of those two kinds of influences of the Spirit, *viz.* those that are ordinary and gracious, and those that are extraordinary and miraculous. The former are by far the most excellent and glorious; as the apostle largely shows. (1 Cor. xii. 31, &c.) Speaking of the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit, he says, "But covet earnestly the best gifts; and yet I show you a more excellent way:" *i. e.* a more excellent way of the influence of the Spirit. And then he goes on, in the next chapter, to show what that more excellent way is, even the grace of that Spirit, which summarily consists in charity, or divine love. And throughout that chapter he shows the great preference of that above inspiration. God communicates his own nature to the soul in saving *grace* in the heart, more than in all miraculous *gifts*. The blessed image of God consists in *that* and not in *these*. The excellency, happiness, and glory of the soul, immediately consists in the former. That is a root which bears infinitely more excellent fruit. Salvation and the eternal enjoyment of God is promised to divine grace, but

not to inspiration. A man may have those extraordinary gifts, and yet be abominable to God, and go to hell. The spiritual and eternal life of the soul consists in the grace of the Spirit, which God bestows only on his favourites and dear children. He has sometimes thrown out the other as it were to dogs and swine, as he did to Balaam, Saul, and Judas; and some who in the primitive times of the Christian church, committed the unpardonable sin. (Heb. vi.) Many wicked men at the day of judgment will plead, "Have we not prophesied in thy name, and in thy name cast out devils, and in thy name done many wonderful works?" The greatest privilege of the prophets and apostles, was not their being inspired and working miracles, but their eminent holiness. The grace that was in their hearts, was a thousand times more their dignity and honour, than their miraculous gifts. The things in which we find David comforting himself, are not his being a king, or a prophet, but the holy influences of the Spirit of God in his heart, communicating to him divine light, love and joy. The apostle Paul abounded in visions, revelations and miraculous gifts, above all the apostles; but yet he esteems all things but loss for the excellency of the spiritual knowledge of Christ. It was not the gifts but the grace of the apostles, that was the proper evidence of their names being written in heaven; in which Christ directs them to rejoice, much more than in the devil's being subject to them. To have grace in the heart, is a higher privilege than the blessed Virgin herself had, in having the body of the second person in the Trinity conceived in her womb by the power of the Highest overshadowing her; Luke xi. 27, 28. "And it came to pass as he spake these things, a certain woman of the company lift up her voice, and said unto him; Blessed is the womb that bare thee, and the paps that thou hast sucked! But he said, Yea, rather blessed are they that hear the word of God and keep it."—See also to the same purpose, Matt. xii. 47, &c.—The influence of the Holy Spirit, or divine charity in the heart, is the greatest privilege and glory of the highest archangel in heaven; yea, this is the very thing by which the creature has fellowship with God himself, with the Father and the Son, in their beauty and happiness. Hereby the saints are made partakers of the divine nature, and have Christ's joy fulfilled in themselves.

The ordinary sanctifying influences of the Spirit of God are the *end* of all extraordinary gifts, as the apostle shews, Ephes. iv. 11, 12, 13. They are good for nothing, any further than as they are subordinate to this end; they will be so far from profiting any without it, that they will only aggravate their misery. This is, as the apostle observes, the most

excellent way of God's communicating his Spirit to his church, it is the greatest glory of the church in all ages. This glory is what makes the church on earth most like the church in heaven, when prophecy, and tongues, and other miraculous gifts cease. And God communicates his Spirit only in that more excellent way of which the apostle speaks, viz. charity or divine love, "which never faileth." Therefore the glory of the approaching happy state of the church does not at all require these extraordinary gifts. As that state of the church will be the nearest of any to its perfect state in heaven, so I believe it will be like it in this, that all extraordinary gifts shall have ceased and vanished away; and all those stars, and the moon, with the reflected light they gave in the night, or in a dark season, shall be swallowed up in the sun of divine love. The apostle speaks of these gifts of inspiration as childish things, in comparison of the influence of the Spirit in divine love; things given to the church only to support it in its minority, till the church should have a complete standing rule established, and all the ordinary means of grace should be settled; but as things that should cease as the church advanced to the state of manhood. 1 Cor. xiii. 11. "When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things;" compared with the three preceding verses.

When the apostle in this chapter speaks of prophecies, tongues and revelations ceasing and vanishing away in the church—when the Christian church should be advanced from a state of minority to a state of manhood—he seems to have respect to its coming to an adult state in this world, as well as in heaven; for he speaks of such a state of manhood wherein those three things, Faith, Hope, and Charity should remain after miracles and revelations had ceased: as in the last verse, and "now abideth (μενει, *remaineth*,) Faith, Hope, and Charity, these three." The apostle's manner of speaking here shews an evident reference to what he had just been saying before; and here is a manifest *antithesis* between *remaining*, and that *failing*, *ceasing*, and *vanishing away*, spoken of in the 8th verse. The apostle had been shewing how all those gifts of inspiration, which were the leading-strings of the Christian church in its infancy, should vanish away when the church came to a state of manhood. Then he returns to observe what things remain after those had failed and ceased; and he observes that those three things shall remain in the church, Faith, Hope, and Charity; and therefore the adult state of the church he speaks of, is the more perfect one at which it shall arrive on earth, especially in the latter ages of the world. And this was the more properly observed to the church at Corinth, upon two

accounts; because the apostle had before observed to that church, that they were in a state of infancy, chap. iii. 1, 2.—And because that church seems above all others to have abounded with miraculous gifts. When the expected glorious state of the church comes, the increase of light shall be so great, that it will in some respect answer what is said, ver. 12, of seeing face to face. (See Isa. xxiv. 23, and xxv. 7.)

Therefore I do not expect a restoration of these miraculous gifts in the approaching glorious times of the church, nor do I desire it. It appears to me, that it would add nothing to the glory of those times, but rather diminish from it. For my part, I had rather enjoy the sweet influences of the Spirit shewing Christ's spiritual divine beauty, infinite grace and dying love, drawing forth the holy exercises of faith, divine love, sweet complacence, and humble joy in God, one quarter of an hour, than to have prophetical visions and revelations the whole year. It appears to me much more probable that God should give immediate revelations to his saints in the dark times of prophecy, than now in the approach of the most glorious and perfect state of his church on earth. It does not appear to me that there is any need of those extraordinary gifts to introduce this happy state, and set up the kingdom of God, through the world; I have seen so much of the power of God in a more excellent way, as to convince me that God can easily do it without.

I would therefore entreat the people of God to be very cautious how they give heed to such things. I have seen them fail in very many instances, and know by experience that impressions being made with great power, and upon the minds of true, yea, eminent saints—even in the midst of extraordinary exercises of grace, and sweet communion with God, and attended with texts of scripture strongly impressed on the mind—are no sure signs of their being revelations from heaven. I have known such impressions fail, in some instances attended with all these circumstances. They who leave the sure word of prophecy—which God has given us as a light shining in a dark place—to follow such impressions and impulses, leave the guidance of the polar star, to follow *a Jack with a lantern.*—No wonder therefore that sometimes they are led into woeful extravagances.

Moreover, seeing inspiration is not to be expected, *let us not despise human learning.* They who assert that human learning is of little or no use in the work of the ministry, do not well consider what they say; if they did, they would not say it. By human learning I mean, and suppose others mean, the improvement of common knowledge by human and outward means. And therefore to say, that human learning is of no use. is as much as to say that the education of a child,

or that the common knowledge which a grown man has, more than a little child, is of no use. At this rate, a child of four years old is as fit for a teacher in the church of God, with the same degree of grace—and capable of doing as much to advance the kingdom of Christ, by his instruction—as a very knowing man of thirty years of age. If adult persons have greater ability and advantage to do service, because they have more knowledge than a little child, then doubtless if they have more human knowledge still, with the same degree of grace, they would have still greater ability and advantage to do service. An increase of knowledge, without doubt, increases a man's advantage either to do good or hurt, according as he is disposed. It is too manifest to be denied, that God made great use of human learning in the apostle Paul, as he also did in Moses and Solomon.

And if knowledge obtained by human means, is not to be despised, then it will follow that the means of obtaining it are not to be neglected, viz. *study;* and that this is of great use in order to a preparation for publicly instructing others. And though having the heart full of the powerful influences of the Spirit of God, may at some time enable persons to speak profitably, yea, very excellently without study; yet this will not warrant us needlessly to cast ourselves down from the pinnacle of the temple, depending upon it that the angel of the Lord will bear us up, and keep us from dashing our foot against a stone, when there is another way to go down, though it be not so quick. And I would pray, that *method*, in public discourses, which tends greatly to help both the understanding and memory, may not be wholly neglected.

Another thing I would beg the dear children of God more fully to consider of, is, how far, and upon what grounds the rules of the holy scriptures will truly justify their passing censures upon other professing Christians, as hypocrites, and ignorant of real religion. We all know that there is a judging and censuring of some sort or other, that the scripture very often and very strictly forbids. I desire that those rules of scripture may be looked into, and thoroughly weighed; and that it may be considered whether our taking it upon us to discern the state of others—and to pass sentence upon them as wicked men, though professing Christians, and of a good visible conversation—be not really forbidden by Christ in the New Testament. If it be, then doubtless the disciples of Christ ought to avoid this practice, however sufficient they may think themselves for it; or however needful, or of good tendency they may think it. It is plain that the sort of judgment which God claims as his prerogative, whatever that be, is forbidden. We know that a certain judging of the hearts of the children of men, is often spoken of as the great prero-

gative of God, and which belongs only to him; as in 1 Kings viii. 39. "Forgive, and do, and give unto every man according to his ways, whose heart thou knowest; for thou, even thou only, knowest the hearts of all the children of men." And if we examine, we shall find that the judging of hearts which is spoken of as God's prerogative, relates not only to the aims and dispositions of men's hearts in particular actions, but chiefly to the state of their hearts as the professors of religion, and with regard to that profession. This will appear very manifest by looking over the following scriptures; 1 Chron. xxviii. 9. Psal. vii. 9, 10, 11. Psal. xxvi. throughout. Prov. xvi. 2. and xvii. 3. and xxi. 2. Job ii. 23, 24, 25. Rev. ii 22, 23. That sort of judging which is God's proper business, is forbidden, as Rom. xiv. 4. "Who art thou that judgeth another man's servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth." James iv. 12, "There is one lawgiver that is able to save or destroy; who art thou that judgest another?" 2 Cor. iv. 3, 4. "But with me it is a very small thing, that I should be judged of you, or of man's judgment; yea, I judge not mine own self; but he that judgeth me is the Lord."

Again, whatsoever kind of judging is the proper work and business of the day of judgment, is what we are forbidden, as in 1 Cor. iv. 5. "Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come; who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the heart; and then shall every man have praise of God." But to distinguish hypocrites, that have the form of godliness and the visible conversation of godly men, from true saints; or, to separate the sheep from the goats, is the proper business of the day of judgment: yea, it is represented as the main business and end of that day. They therefore do greatly err who take it upon them positively to determine who are sincere, and who are not—to draw the dividing line between true saints and hypocrites, and to separate between sheep and goats, setting the one on the right hand and the other on the left—and to distinguish and gather out the tares from amongst the wheat. Many of the servants of the owner of the field are very ready to think themselves sufficient for this, and are forward to offer their service to this end; but their Lord says, "Nay, lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them. Let both grow together until the harvest;" and in the time of harvest I will take care to see a thorough separation made; as Matth. xiii. 28, 29, 30. Agreeably to that forementioned prohibition of the apostle, 1 Cor. iv. 5. "Judge nothing before the time." In this parable, by the servants who have the care of the fruit of the field, is doubtless meant the same with the servants who have

the care of the fruit of the vineyard, Luke xx. and who are elsewhere represented as servants of the Lord of the harvest appointed as labourers in his harvest. These we know are ministers of the gospel. Now is that parable in the 13th of Matthew fulfilled: "While men sleep," during a long, sleepy, dead time in the church,) "the enemy has sowed tares:" now is the time "when the blade is sprung up," and religion is reviving; and now some of the servants who have the care of the field say, "Let us go and gather up the tares."—— I know there is a great aptness in men who suppose they have had some experience of the power of religion, to think themselves sufficient to discern and determine the state of others by a little conversation with them; and experience has taught me that this is an error. I once did not imagine that the heart of man had been so unsearchable as it is. I am less charitable, and less uncharitable than once I was. I find more things in wicked men that may counterfeit, and make a fair shew of piety; and more ways that the remaining corruption of the godly may make them appear like carnal men, formalists and dead hypocrites, that once I knew of. The longer I live the less I wonder that God challenges it as his prerogative to try the hearts of the children of men, and directs that this business should be let alone till harvest. I desire to adore the wisdom of God, and his goodness to me and my fellow-creatures, that he has not committed this great business into the hands of such a poor, weak and dim-sighted creature—one of so much blindness, pride, partiality, prejudice, and deceitfulness of heart—but has committed it into the hands of one infinitely fitter for it, and has made it his prerogative.

The talk of some persons, and the account they give of their experiences, is exceedingly satisfying, and such as forbids and banishes the thought of their being any other than the precious children of God. It obliges, and as it were forces full charity; but yet we must allow the scriptures to stand good that speak of every thing in the saint belonging to the spiritual and divine life as hidden. (Col. iii. 3, 4.) Their food is the hidden manna; they have meat to eat that others know not of; a stranger intermeddles not with their joys. The heart in which they possess their divine distinguishing ornaments, is the hidden man, and in the sight of God only, 1 Pet. iii. 4. Their new name, which Christ has given them, no man knows but he that receives it. Rev. ii. 17. The praise of the true Israelites, whose circumcision is that of the heart, is not of men but of God, Rom. ii. 29; that is, they can be certainly known and discerned to be Israelites, so as to have the honour that belongs to such, only of God; as appears by the use of the like expression by the same apostle, 1 Cor. iv. 5.—

Here he speaks of its being God's prerogative to judge who are upright Christians, and what he will do at the day of judgment, adding, "and then shall every man have praise of God."

The instance of Judas is remarkable; whom—though he had been so much amongst the rest of the disciples, all persons of true experience, yet—his associates never seemed to have entertained a thought of his being any other than a true disciple, till he discovered himself by his scandalous practice.—And the instance of Ahitophel is also very remarkable; David did not suspect him, though so wise and holy a man, so great a divine, and had such a great acquaintance with scripture. He knew more than all his teachers, more than the ancients, was grown old in experience, and was in the greatest ripeness of his judgment. He was a great prophet, and was intimately acquainted with Ahitophel, he being his familiar friend, and most intimate companion in religious and spiritual concerns.—Yet David not only never discovered him to be a hypocrite, but relied upon him as a true saint. He relished his religious discourse, it was sweet to him, and he counted him an eminent saint; so that he made him above any other man his guide and counsellor in soul matters; but yet he was not only no saint, but a notoriously wicked man, a murderous vile wretch. Psal. lv. 11—14. "Wickedness is in the midst thereof; deceit and guile depart not from her streets: For it was not an open enemy that reproached me; then I could have borne it: neither was it he that hated me, that did magnify himself against me; then I would have hid myself from him: But it was thou, a man mine equal, my guide and mine acquaintance: We took sweet counsel together, and walked into the house of God in company."

To suppose that men have ability and right to determine the state of the souls of visible Christians, and so to make an open separation between saints and hypocrites, that true saints may be of one visible company, and hypocrites of another, separated by a partition that men make, carries in it an inconsistency; for it supposes that God has given men power to make another visible church, within his visible church; for by visible Christians or visible saints; i. e. persons who have a right to be received as such in the eye of a public charity.—None can have a right to exclude any one of this visible church but in the way of that regular ecclesiastical proceeding, which God has established in his visible church. I beg of those who have a true zeal for promoting this work of God, well to consider these things. I am persuaded, that as many of them as have much to do with souls, if they do not hearken to me now, will be of the same mind when they have had more experience.

And another thing that I would entreat the zealous friends of this glorious work of God to avoid, is managing the controversy with opposers with too much heat, and appearance of an angry zeal; and particularly insisting very much in public prayer and preaching, on the persecution of opposers. If their persecution were ten times so great as it is, methinks it would not be best to say so much about it. If it becomes Christians to be like lambs, not apt to complain and cry when they are hurt; it becomes them to be dumb and not to open their mouth, after the example of our dear Redeemer; and not to be like swine that are apt to scream aloud when they are touched. We should not be ready presently to think and speak of fire from heaven, when the Samaritans oppose us, and will not receive us into their villages. God's zealous ministers would do well to think of the direction the apostle Paul gave to a zealous minister, 2 Tim, ii. 24—26. "And the servant of the Lord must not strive, but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance, to the acknowledging of the truth; and that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will."

I would humbly recommend to those that love the Lord Jesus Christ, and would advance his kingdom, a good attendance to that excellent rule of prudence which Christ has left us, Matth. ix. 16, 17. "No man putteth a piece of new cloth into an old garment; for that which is put in to fill it up, taketh from the garment, and the rent is made worse. Neither do men put new wine into old bottles; else the bottles break and the wine runneth out, and the bottles perish. But they put new wine into new bottles, and both are preserved." I am afraid that the wine is now running out in some part of this land, for want of attending to this rule. For though I believe we have confined ourselves too much to a certain stated method and form in the management of our religious affairs, which has had a tendency to cause all our religion to degenerate into mere formality, yet whatever has the appearance of a great innovation—that tends much to shock and surprise people's minds, and to set them a talking and disputing—tends greatly to hinder the progress of the power of religion. It raises the opposition of some, diverts the minds of others, and perplexes many with doubts and scruples. It causes people to swerve from their great business, and turn aside to vain jangling. Therefore that which is very much beside the common practice, unless it be a thing in its own nature of considerable importance, had better be avoided. Herein we shall follow the example of one who had the greatest success in propagating the power of religion. 1 Cor. ix. 20—23. "Unto the Jews, I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews; to them that are under the law, as under the law, that I might

gain them that are under the law; to them that are without law, as without law, (being not without law to God, but under to Christ,) that I might gain them that are without law. To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak. I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some, And this I do for the gospel's sake, that I might be partaker thereof with you."

END OF VOLUME THREE.

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